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Antar a bedoueen romance

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A N T A R,
A BEDOUEEN ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC,

BY

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ORIENTAL SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT
CONSTANTINOPLE.

PART THE FIRST.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

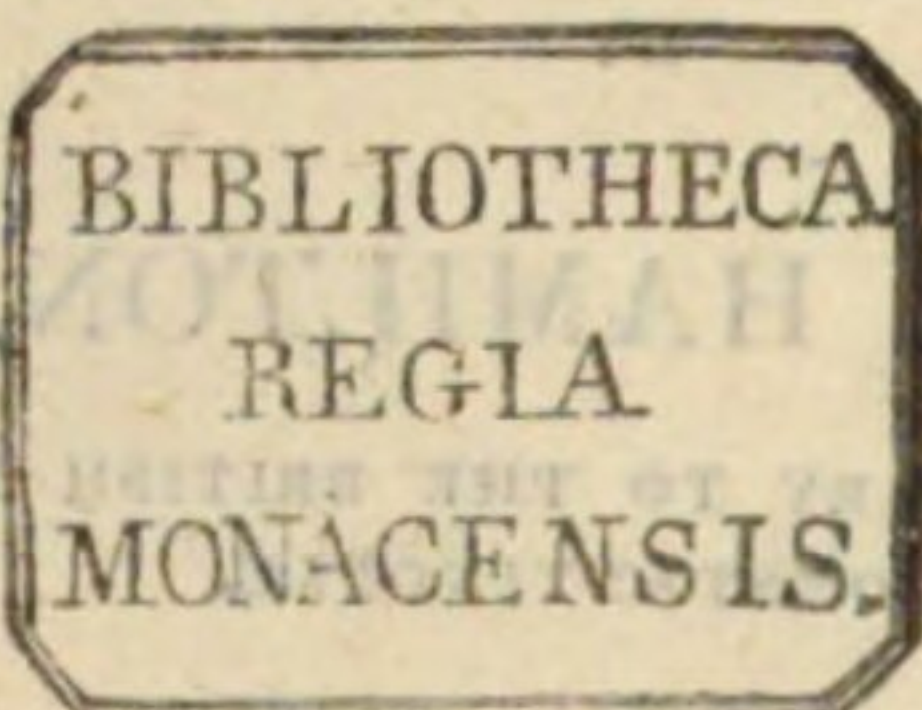
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1820.

A. N. T. A. R.

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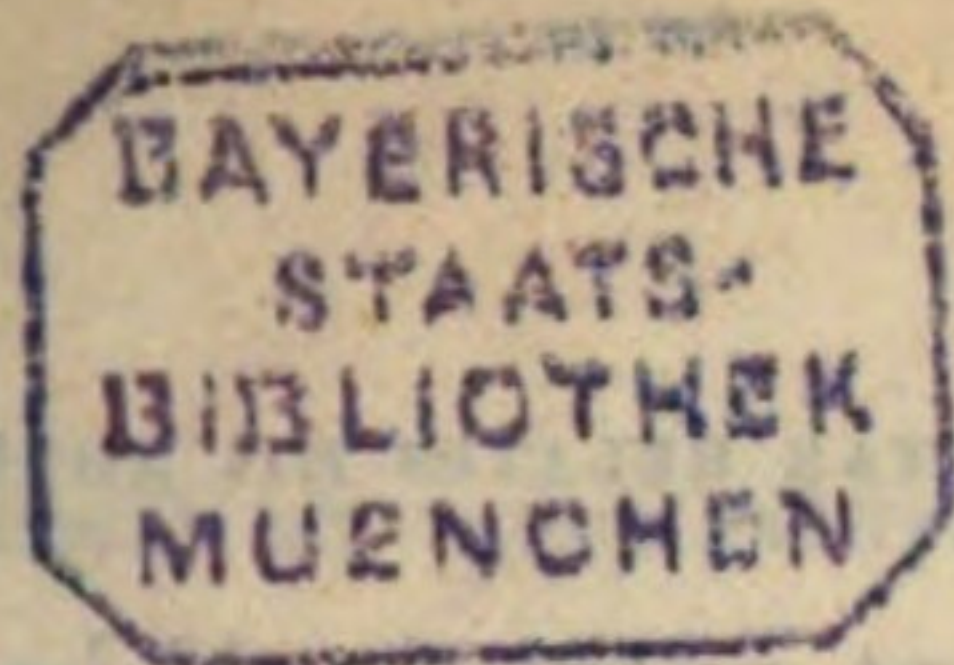
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1850.



LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

ANTAR.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANTAR remained in the tents till King Zoheir sent a messenger after him, saying, Your presence is required by King Zoheir, Aboolfawaris, that he may execute his agreement with you. As soon as he reached King Zoheir's dwellings, he smiled upon him, and seated him among his sons. Welcome, he cried; I greet thee, Champion of the Absians, on the day of battle; protector of their wives and children—And he felicitated him on the safety of Ibla.

My expedition, said Antar, was only on her account, in order that I might rescue her from one who plotted her death and annihilation; and thus he continued in verse:

“O King of noble mind; O most renowned for
“every virtue and high qualification—give up your
“ears to attend to my discourse. However difficult

“ of attainment, no one should dread any enterprise;
“ and when resolved on revenge, he should defy all
“ fears. If fortune deserts me, my hand is my hope,
“ and it will succeed; and glory shall raise me above
“ mankind. I only fear you, whom no one shall
“ afflict with pain; and I respect only women. I
“ have that dependance on you, that with it I brave
“ all evils; and in you I only acknowledge one that
“ preserves his protection. So seize what is my due,
“ and aid me against a man who is a foul wretch,
“ degraded and unrespected.”

When Antar had terminated his verses, he related to King Zoheir all that had happened to him, and he was exceedingly surprised at such events. Ibla then, said he, is among the living. Yes, my lord, replied Antar; she is at her father's: but, O King, all is past that befel her; I would indeed have striven to release her, had even mountains opposed me in the form of men.

O Antar, said King Zoheir, you and Rebia will not cease quarrelling till you have opened upon us a door that will never close. You would have done right to have informed me of this important point, and I would have despatched a messenger to King Numan, and have explained the business: Numan would have released Ibla from the tribe of Shibān; you too would not have gone away and taken the property of Mooferridj, who is absent in the service of the King of Persia; and we should then have had no farther negotiation with him.

My lord, said Antar, had I acquainted you with it, Rebia would have heard of it; he would have mounted, or sent word to have her killed; but now the charge against him is established by her appearance; but as to the tribe of Shibān, I will soon show you what I will do with them, that they may restore Ibla's tiara and property. May God destroy Rebia! cried King Zoheir, and send him on the path of death for his insidious practices, in carrying off by force the daughter of his uncle, and delivering her up to a tribe that was not of her species. For this, may God punish him in his property and his person!

King Zoheir related to Antar all that happened to Rebia at Rikaya Beni Malik during the night attack—and the misery he had endured. When the news of Ibla became public, all the women and noble ladies assembled round her, congratulating her on her safety, and the same evening the intelligence reached the tribe of Fazarah, and Rebia heard it. His soul melted within him, and his gall burst, as he said to his brothers, What say you to this? Did you not tell me, said they, that you did not leave Shibān till you had actually accomplished the death of Ibla? I am quite bewildered, said Rebia, at this circumstance; for certainly I did not even go to King Numan till Ibla was buried in the sand, and with my own eyes I saw her blood on the hands of a slave whom we ordered to kill her: but,

indeed, should the slave have betrayed us—And he sent for the man who brought the news, and asked him how Ibla had been rescued. My lord, he answered, I have not heard the particulars, but I saw Antar on his return, and with him were some companions and property that filled the whole land, and by his side was a swarthy slave, tall in stature, beautiful of countenance. I inquired about him, for his extraordinary beauty surprised me. They told me it was Basharah, and that he was the person who had rescued Ibla from Rebia, and had taken away all the wealth of his master, being desirous to fix himself among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, on account of a young girl who lived with Antar, named Rabiāt, to whom he had been long attached.

This explained the whole business, and he said to himself, This is indeed what never entered into my calculation; but, continued Rebia, let King Zoheir do me justice, otherwise I will stir up dissensions between him and King Numan, whom I will urge to invade him with the Persians and the Arabs; and I will say to him, When I asked his daughter in marriage for him, he answered, I have no daughter that can do for King Numan. This was Rebia's situation: but Antar in a subsequent conversation said to King Zoheir, I request permission to send to Rebia, in order to demand restitution of Ibla's property. Should he confess it, and say the devil tempted me, and it was taken from me on the night

attack, I will pardon him ; but should he deny it, I will punish him as he deserves. And he rose up and went home.

Now Cais, King Zoheir's son, was not easy about Rebia, so he would not venture to give any answer to Antar, for he dreaded the prospect of any disturbances among the Arabs ; and all were interested in the elucidation of this dreadful business. Basharah was all this time devoting himself to Rabiath.

At dawn, Antar told his uncle Malik and his son Amroo to go to King Zoheir, and not to quit him till he should send to Rebia and demand Ibla's property. They accordingly departed, and said, O King, our daughter has been captured in her own country, and carried by force to Shiban : you yourself are witness to this. Ibla's property has been plundered, and you are the King of the time. We cannot either forget the stratagem of Amarah, who also took her prisoner, and exposed her among the tribe of Cahtan ; and now Rebia has endeavoured to put her to death after having violated her reputation among the Arabs. But that is now past ; what I demand is Rebia's punishment for his treachery ; otherwise, my nephew Antar will use violent measures, and release our property from him by the sword.

This discourse alarmed King Zoheir, as to the troubles and dissensions that might arise in consequence, so he sent for his son Cais. Know, said he, that Rebia has brought disgrace upon this tribe, and

his crime is made clear by Ibla's re-appearance. I wish, my son, you would go to him, and order him to make restitution of the property, and not thwart these people any more, before I let them requite him for his misdeeds.

Prince Cais set off with five horsemen, and when he came nigh to the tribe of Fazarah, he sent on a man to apprise Rebia of his arrival. Rebia and Amarah, and Hadifah, came out to meet him and saluted him. For what purpose are you come? said Hadifah. O Cais, is it for the chase in our country, or on a visit, that we may enjoy your society? I have only come, said Cais, on account of this man, who has behaved ill to the tribe, and has abandoned his friends to be insulted by his enemies. He related to Rebia all that had happened, and demanded all Ibla's property.

Well, said Rebia to Hadifah, did ever the like of what I have endured from my tribe befall any human being? Is there in the world a severer distress than mine? Have I indeed usurped to myself wealth not even all the kings of the Arabs could supply? Had not my brothers overtaken me, the wild beasts might have eaten my carcase; and after all, they accuse me of this infamous transaction, and King Zoheir believes, to my discredit, all that worthless insignificant slave can state to my prejudice. I never set eyes upon Ibla, neither on a journey, nor in society. I never took from her a single robe or jewel, and all the world knows I used to rail at my brother

Amarah on her account, and dissuaded him from pursuing her; and truly I have been as much affected by this cruel event—yes, just as much as her own father. Perhaps it was some Irak horsemen that chanced to meet her, and carried her as a prisoner away from home, and now have released her; for I have just heard she has returned to the tribe of Abs, and that God has restored all her charms to her family. She's an honest girl, and speaks the truth; but did she see me the night she was carried off to Shibban? and did she ever set eyes on me when in that country? Ascertain this point, and let Antar trust in what she says; and if Ibla absolves me in her answer, let them demand her property from the tribe of Shibban, where she was disgraced and dishonoured, but that tribe will never let Antar possess himself of their property, or their maiden Rabiath. But truly their horsemen and their armies will fall upon you; their dust will rise over you, and perhaps King Numan will assist them with the warriors of Lakhm and Juzam, all noble people; and will make your father repent when repentance will not avail him; but now he is warned, and let him look to his own affairs.

Prince Cais listened, and he hesitated what to believe. Cousin, said he, you have spoken the truth; I know Antar is a wretch, and that he has offended you in this business. Now that, O Cais, you are well acquainted with this circumstance, said Hadifah, why do you not put to death this cursed slave?

Prince Cais wheeled about, and returned with his associates to inform his father of Rebia's answer. They continued till they came near home, when he saw his father, and his brothers, and the heroes of the tribe all assembled at the lake of Zat ul irsad; he looked at them as some one thus repeated—

“ Behold our spacious residence sweetly flowered,
“ it combines every pleasure of life. On the pro-
“ jections of our dwellings is the narcissus, lovely
“ in its sword-blades enveloped in green armour.
“ Mark how the edge of the scimitar and the point
“ of the spear surround the fair and the swarthy.
“ The men are like lions when they protect their
“ young, yea, even like rapacious lions. Their
“ women are like fawns, and their children like the
“ glittering planet Venus. The modest women
“ dance in security with the men, and in the enjoy-
“ ments of life there is no molestation. There is
“ only among them the lion of the tribe, their chief,
“ and he is Antar.”

After Cais' departure for the tribe of Fazarah, Hatal, and a party from the tribe of Ghiftan, came to visit King Zoheir, and he gave them a feast at the lake. When Cais arrived they all stood up; he mentioned Rebia's answer, and how he depended on Ibla's testimony. Antar was seated there, and when he heard Cais' narrative, May God curse that Rebia! he exclaimed. Restrain yourself, said King Zoheir, O Aboolfawaris, and let Ibla be questioned. I will go and interrogate her, said her father. So

he rose and went to his daughter. Questioning her, Ibla replied, May God curse falsehood and liars ! I saw not Rebia the night they carried me off from the lake, and I saw him not in Shibān. Malik returned and told King Zoheir : Well, said he, there is nothing then to be said against Rebia. But Basharah happened to be present, and as soon as he heard Malik's and King Zoheir's remarks, O mighty king, he exclaimed, what is all this artifice ? Was Ibla present among the men when Rebia and my master divided her property ? But when I returned and told them Ibla was killed and under the sand, then Rebia danced and capered for joy, and presented me his own inner garment and turban. Basharah disappeared for a short time, and quickly returned, bringing with him the garment, turban, and poniard, with which Rebia had bribed him ; he placed them before King Zoheir : This is what Rebia gave me, said he, for the murder of Ibla. When the chiefs of Abs saw this, they all exclaimed against the nefarious and infamous conduct of Rebia, and they wanted to have him seized.

When Cais heard the disgrace of Rebia, his indignation and rage increased. He immediately mounted his horse again, and said, By the faith of an Arab, never will I sit down till I have elucidated this affair that will burst my gall. He hastened back to the tribe of Fazarah, and when Rebia saw him, he was in great consternation and amazed at his speedy return ; and to his inquiries,

Cais related the story of Basharah. When Rebia heard this he burst into a laugh, but it was the laugh of conscious shame: in his heart there blazed a fire of rage; he clapped his hands and appeared much pleased. Now, said he, by the faith of an Arab, my property that was taken from me at Rikaya Beni Malik will come to light, for that garment, turban, and poniard were taken during that night-attack; and now, indeed, I have no enemy but Antar.

Cais was confused and astonished at the words of Rebia. He remained that night, and did nothing but consult about the destruction of Antar till morning dawned, when Cais mounted and returned home.

Well, said Rebia to his brother, what did you think of the answer which I made to Cais? God prosper you, said his brother, how you lied and managed to confirm falsehoods, artifice, and villany, and fraud!

Cais went home, and met his father at the lake, and told him all Rebia had stated in reply, and that the garment and turban were taken from him during the night-attack, and that he has no other enemy but Antar. Indeed, my son, said King Zoheir, I am quite bewildered about the families of Carad and Zeead; however, put this business off till to-morrow, when these guests will go away, and the contest between Rebia and Basharah shall be decided. The next day the Ghiftanians having de-

parted home, King Zoheir sent after Antar and his uncles, ordering them to bring Basharah, that Rebia might be confronted.

My lord, said Antar, when they were all assembled, what is Rebia's answer? Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, Rebia says that you have the property that was taken from him at Rikaya Beni Malik, amongst which was this garment and turban; but bring Basharah here that we may understand what he has to say, and then the offender shall be punished according to his acts. Antar jumped up and went to the tents in search of Basharah, but he could not find him. He asked Rabiath about him, but she said, O my lord, since that time he was with you at the lake I have not seen him, and he never returned. Antar shuddered, and was amazed. He went back and told King Zoheir, who said, He would not have disappeared had he not been a liar, and doubtless you are concerned in this business, and this is not an affair becoming an Arab chief: and King Zoheir expressed his wrath. The warriors of the family of Carad retired, and their shame was great. Antar also returned, saying, I will not quit this country till I have rescued my property with the sword, and he thus repeated:

“Greatness has excited jealousy, and I am
“avoided; did not passion influence me, love
“should not master me to such a degree. I would
“possess myself by force of what I obtained from
“fortune, doubly armed and powerful as she is;

“ but should my hand be broken its power would
“ not be obeyed, for I have a heart that spurns at
“ fortune. There is a time for compassion and
“ likewise for ignorance, but, O tribe, I am more
“ inclined towards mercy. I cling to my kindred
“ and honour them, and conquerors are the objects
“ of my respect, and I admire them. But here
“ they remark my forbearance, and my weakness
“ inflames them with hope; but I shall not be van-
“ quished. I shrink from the base-minded, for I
“ know avarice should be avoided, and generosity
“ sought after. It is ascertained that liberality is a
“ quality in man that is talked of by the good, and
“ subdues all dispositions. Ambition I have, and
“ its mansion is above Arcturus, and my residence
“ is exalted to the skies.”

O my son, said Shedad, we are with thee, and whithersoever thou goest we will accompany thee. We will not remain in a spot where thou art despised and ill treated. But stop till we obtain some intelligence of Basharah, and let us observe the conclusion of our adventure with Rebia. Antar staid quietly three days, but on the fourth night, when Antar was sitting alone, a black slave introduced himself, and said, O Aboolfawaris, protect me and realize my wishes, and I will give you good tidings. What are your tidings? asked Antar. My lord, he cried, haste to your friend Basharah, and release him from the power of Rebia. And how, exclaimed Antar, came he into his power? Master,

cried the slave, thus it is: When Basharah gave evidence against Rebia, and made the affair public, he said to his brother, What think you of this slave Basharah, who has received our bribes in Shibān, and is now come to witness against us here? He then called to one of his slaves, called Marzook, and said, Well, Marzook, you are ever talking of your zeal, but till now I have never had occasion for your services. What do you want, my lord? asked the slave. What I want of you, said Rebia, is that you go to the tents of the tribe of Abs, and bring me Basharah, that I may expose him to the cruelest tortures. The slave took with him four others, and set out for the Absian tents, and secreted himself in a valley near the habitations, seeking the lake of Zat ul irsād. Here Marzook and his comrades remained concealed till Basharah rose up; he was intoxicated; and as he strayed to some distance from the tents, Marzook plunged upon him like a vulture, and rolling him up in a sack, carried him off to the valley, and thence they all repaired with him to the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as they came into the presence of Rebia, Now, he cried, are all my wishes fulfilled. He dug a deep pit, and threw him into it, covering it with branches and cameldorsers, and stationed over him a slave-girl, called Yamama, beautiful in face and form, and much in favour with Rebia. Early in the morning, when Rebia went out to the chase with his brother, the damsel came to Basharah, and as soon as she beheld

him, love for him struck into her heart, and entered deep into her senses and her soul. How is it that these wretches have thus ill-used you? she cried. With whom am I? fair maid, he asked. With the family of Zeead, she replied. Then can I never escape, he added. You may escape, said she; if you will sincerely engage yourself with me, and swear to me you will be my lover, I will release you from this peril, and supply you with provisions. Now she had a brother called Masrook, who was attached to a maiden whose master was one of Oorwah's men. So she said to him, What will you say to one who will bring you to your dear Wirdeh? How can that be? said he. Instantly run, said she, to Antar, son of Shedad, and give him intelligence of Basharah, and say to him, Master, bring me and my beloved together, and I will give you information about the designs of Rebia towards Basharah; and she told him all his distresses. The slave instantly departed, and coming to Antar's tents, he introduced himself, and related all the above. Antar was overjoyed at this news, and immediately sent for the master of the girl Wirdeh, and demanded her of him; he not only surrendered her, but gave her also a string of good he and she camels, and afterwards they all went to King Zoheir, to whom Antar explained all that had passed. King Zoheir was agitated and amazed: And what do you intend to do? said he to Antar. I am determined, he replied, to proceed to the tribe of Fazarah and release

this foreigner. O King, exclaimed Shas and Malik, we will also go and settle this business. Go, said their father; and Antar departed with the princes, but first said to Oorwah, O Ebeool Ebyez, mount your men, and tell them to conceal themselves in the valley of Yaamoora. Oorwah having executed his commands, they all proceeded till they reached the tribe of Fazarah, who, on seeing a dust arise, mounted, as also Rebia and Hadifah, to meet Antar and King Zoheir's sons. What! my cousin, said Rebia to Antar, art thou come to oppose us, or dost thou repent of thy obstinacy? O Rebia, said Antar, let him repent who has acted ill, and let him be ashamed of his disgraceful deeds. Produce Basharah, said Rebia, who said I bribed him to murder Ibla; let him confront me in the presence of these Arab chieftains. Be witnesses, ye that are present, exclaimed Antar. Drawing forth his invincible Dhami and urging on Abjer till he came up to the pit, he cried out to Shiboob, Bring forth this foreigner, and immediately Shiboob descended (O friends!) and brought out Basharah from the pit, from underneath the pack-saddles and camel-cloths. Ah! exclaimed Rebia in despair: and Hadifah said to him, I will stir up a battle between you and Antar; cry out in my name, and see what I will do. Upon this he shouted out, O Ebe Hidjar! Dost thou not mark this treacherous slave? And the men encountered each other, and the warriors engaged, and limbs were hewn off. Antar dispersed the people, and

penetrated towards Hadifah in the field of battle; he perceived him exciting his men to the contest; he engaged him, and struck the head of his mare, and hewed it off. Hadifah was in a most deplorable state, and his ribs were all dislocated. Then he met Rebia and Amarah, and took them prisoners, and despatched them with Shiboob and Basharah to the dwellings of the Absian chiefs. But when the sons of King Zoheir saw this terrible affair, and ascertained the treachery of Rebia, and that all he said was false and deceitful, they wheeled round their horses' heads, and went home to inform their father of the circumstance. But the chief Beder, when the account of what Antar had done reached him, mounted his horse, and came forwards in order to extinguish this dissension; he saw his son Hadifah on his return in a most shattered condition, who, on being questioned, related all that had passed, and how Antar had slain his mare and his men. By the truth of the pillar of stone of Mecca, he exclaimed, Antar must have had some consideration for you, or he would have left you dead, for he came to rescue his guest, and you irritated him. He galloped on to overtake Antar, as he saw him overthrowing his people. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we have always heard you were a most impartial man, but to-day we perceive you are inclined to violence and oppression. My lord, said Antar, I came here to release my friend from captivity, but your people stirred up this commotion and sought

to fight me, so to defend my own life was my bounden duty. O Aboolfawaris, said Beder, grant me this day this proof of your generosity, and Antar instantly ordered his men to depart; they desisted and went home. On the way they passed by the valley of Yaamoora, where they joined Basharah and Shiboob and their prisoners, Rebia and the wretch Amarah. Basharah came forward, and kissing Antar's hand, O Aboolfawaris, he cried, by the life of Ibla's two eyes, give me authority over Rebia and Amarah that I may parade them among the tribe of Abs. Do as you like, said Antar, for I know King Zoheir will not keep on good terms with me. And he thus expressed himself:

“ O Ibla, thou art the light of my eyes: so command my existence, and rule me, thou, my ultimate hope. If thou quittest the tribe of Abs, reside not in the mansions of degradation, and listen not to the railers, for the land after our departure will remain without any celebrated defender or hero. Ask of Fazarah concerning my deeds when they poured down upon me like a deluging cloud. They brandished their barbed spears in rage against me, but they beheld the refulgence of my dazzling scimitar. Let Beder, son of Amroo, inform you what a warrior am I; how I meet armies with a heart hard as a fragment of a mountain. I engaged their horsemen and they were dispersed, and my thrusts came upon them quicker than death. My steed bore

“me away; and as he went he slipped among the
“skulls scattered by the sword and spear. I took
“prisoners the chiefs of that mighty tribe, and I
“returned overjoyed, like one intoxicated. O se-
“paration! my heart trembles at separation, but I
“weep not for the separation from friends and
“native land, but for the separation from her, in
“whose eyes is my malady, and truly this pains me
“and increases all my vexations. I move in terror,
“fearful of separation, as my enemies move trem-
“bling through fear of me.”

Oorwah felt aware he had spoken only the truth about the tribe of Abs. Then they all marched on till they came near home, when lo! there arose a great dust, and under it appeared some noble Ab-sians on full gallop, and their spears pointed. These were King Zoheir and his sons, and his nobles with their standards over their heads, and horses scattered about. The reason of it was this: when Princes Shas and Malik returned home they made a great uproar among the tents, and related the fray that had taken place between Antar and the tribe of Fazarah; their father was much vexed. I was convinced, said he, this dispute between Antar and Rebia would not be decided amicably, and having inquired the particulars and its origin, Before we could reach them, said his sons, blood had flowed, and bodies were dead. Every one now mounted and came forth from the tents, and the people were all in confusion, and the families of Carad

were in great tumult, and the women were abusing Antar. As soon as Antar saw King Zoheir and his sons, he dismounted and hastened forward, anxious to kiss his hand. King Zoheir stooped down and kissed him between the eyes, and ordered him to mount, and as they all departed home, Antar told King Zoheir about Rebia, and how he had taken him and his brother Amarah prisoners. But how is it, said King Zoheir, that I see them not with you? My uncle Malik, said Antar, has taken them home, who said, These fellows shall remain in bondage with me, till they restore the property they took from my daughter. Yes, indeed, said King Zoheir, your uncle shall do such a deed as this, when I am asleep and under the sand; but as long as I am on the back of my stallion, I will not permit an Arab to aggrandize you and degrade me. And King Zoheir evinced great wrath in his countenance till they reached the tents, and behold there came some fugitives, and behind them a horseman with a drawn sword in his hand. They contemplated the fugitives, and lo! they were Shedad and his brother. Now when Basharah took away Amarah and Rebia, and brought them to the Carad tents, he mounted them on two stripped camels, and placed them tail foremost, and proceeded crying them out through the tents, saying, This is the punishment, the lightest punishment for those who carry off their countrywomen to the Arab tribes. All the women of the tribe of Abs and Carad came to enjoy

the sight, and Ibla stood with her companions: she was superbly dressed, and all her sorrows had vanished. She was conversing and saying (whilst Amarah heard her), This is indeed but a small chastisement for you. You stole my property—you wanted to murder me—you made a pretty business of it—but God has requited you speedily. Amarah gazed at her, whilst she was glancing from right to left, and flaunting about in the most beautiful fascinating manner, and her words sank into his heart cooler than the purest water: he screamed, Alas! alas! for thee, O daughter of Malik! Oh! Oh! for the hour of possession! Be silent, thou dolt! said Rebia, for all this has happened to us on account of thy love, and never wilt thou desist from thy perverseness, till every vestige of us is rooted out. Now Cais, King Zoheir's son, had been left behind in the tents, and when the news reached him of what had happened to his friends, Rebia and Amarah, his pride was roused; he mounted and rode towards the Carad tents, bellowing like a lion, and the foam issuing from the corners of his lips; and when he saw Rebia, he wept, and raised his voice, and exclaimed: Alas! the disgrace of this violence from those bastards! Where is the respect of kinsmen? Sons of my uncle! where is the noble pride of illustrious Arabs? But Rebia continued in this abject state till Cais was quite shocked, and the whole country seemed obscured in his eyes. So he rushed upon Basharah, and struck

him with his sword; he cut him across the shoulders, and left him sprawling. He cried out to Antar's father and uncles, and they instantly disappeared from his presence, alarmed at his high rank and dignity, but not afraid of his prowess. And when they all left him, he untied Rebia and his brother; Go to our tents, said he; and he himself galloped after the family of Carad, till they launched out into the desert, where, perceiving the troops of King Zoheir returning with Antar, they speeded towards them: My son, cried King Zoheir, what is this affair? What stupidity has succeeded to modesty and good sense? He stopped and said, What discretion is there in man, when he sees the chiefs of his tribe degraded? And he related the story of Rebia, and the indignities Basharah had made him suffer, and finally said, O my father, I will never rest in this spot till I have satiated my vengeance against the family of Carad, and have put Antar to death. King Zoheir was distressed, and felt assured the sword must fall upon his tribe, and would disperse his people among the hills and plains; for the animosity between the families of Carad and Zeead could not be tranquillised: O Aboolfawaris, said he to Antar, depart with your party from this country, for these people will not let you alone, and you will not submit to any indignity, and this disturbance cannot terminate satisfactorily. So depart from us, and do what you please.

Antar expressed his obedience and submission; I

will instantly depart, said he, with my party, and if I am able, I will rescue my property, or will die in the attempt. Then he addressed himself to King Zoheir, and thus:

“ Am I injured? and my spear and sword are
“ my defence, and the guide to glory is attached to
“ my bit. I have a two-armed power that can
“ struggle with lions and defend me. I am ho-
“ noured wherever I go. My person is respected,
“ and my station is not easily attained. I will
“ abandon these noble dwellings; but the lustre of
“ swords shall urge me on in the obscurity of the
“ dust. Cups of wine are at my disposal, but I
“ desire only the blaze in the fiery contest. I will
“ soon quit you; I want not your country, but I
“ will attack you on the wings of darkness. I will
“ seek my enemies with my lion-associates, each a
“ lion in the battle and the contest: I abandon
“ sleep, unless I can kindle a blaze at night-fall
“ that will involve my foes in a blast of fire. My
“ hand falls upon their heads like torrents of flakes
“ of fire in the dead of the night. Death they shall
“ behold exterminating their friends, and far shall
“ fly their heads hewn off by my sword. My com-
“ rades shall shake their spears in their hands, and
“ infuse death into the entrails of their opponents.
“ The brilliancy of their swords in the clouds of
“ dust shall be like the beauteous rays of the sun
“ through the rain. You have renounced my deeds,
“ but my power is my companion, and the blow of

“ my Indian blade among the tents. I will abandon the base and the dastardly, and I have drawn my sword for an ungrateful prince. O songstress ! be thy song the neigh ! for that is my music, and streams of blood my wine. Towards Ramda be my journey, for that is my abode, and the place for my tents. Speak not to me of the pleasures of life, for the attainment of my high ambition is my health and my sickness. In glory is the delight of every one anxious for renown, not in drinking nor in eating. Shall I disgrace myself by submitting to dishonour, when my sword falls on the necks like an ostrich ?”

Prince Cais cut short his verses ; Hey, bastard ! he exclaimed, you found Ibla in Shibban, and you come to claim her property from the tribe of Abs and Adnan. You should demand her goods from the people where you found her. My lord, said Antar, put not yourself into a passion, I am going to leave you, and shall look after my own affairs ; but my adventures and my deeds shall soon reach you : you shall hear how I will rescue my property ; but as to your expression of bastard, no one but yourself had ventured to make use of such language, or his death would have been at hand, and his exit from this world instantaneous. Then he addressed him, saying,

“ I had made of thee a strong breast-plate to ward off from me the arrows of my foes, but it is thou that hast thrown them. In thee I placed

“ my strong hold when ignominy should assail me
“ on all sides ; but if thou canst not preserve thy
“ friendship as a protection for me, be then neither
“ for me nor against me, at least, keep aside and
“ be impartial, and let my enemies hurl their darts
“ at me. From how many foes have I drawn blood,
“ and from how many men have I desired to be re-
“ moved ! I dread not disgrace when alone, even
“ when the battle destroys the horses and the horse-
“ men, There are people who must either live
“ great and renowned, or must hide their fall under
“ the earth.”

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, Strike the tents, he cried to his father and his uncles, and prepare for departure, that the heart of King Zoheir may be at ease, and my lord Cais have all his wishes fulfilled. They did as he directed, and they separated from the troops in order to seek the tents, when lo ! loud screams arose, and plunder and pillage commenced among their dwellings ; they hastened on their horses to ascertain what was the matter, indignation blazing in the heart of Antar : Verily our tribe have evinced their hatred towards us, he exclaimed, and he drew forth his sword, and threw himself among the tents. The cause of this was the family of Zeead ; for they, as soon as Prince Cais had liberated them, and had set out to meet Antar, sought the Carad tents. Amarah entered the dwelling of Malik with the view of obtaining a look at Ibla ; but Rebia wanted some

horse trappings, when lo ! he saw the chests Antar had taken from him on the night-surprise, when he was wounded at Rikaya beni Malik : there he also found all the precious goods King Numan had given him : he recognised the whole. Hola ! hola ! he cried out, this is the property Antar took from me by force ; it was he who wounded me, and he nearly killed me. Now when Cais had mounted in order to liberate Rebia, a crowd of slaves had followed him ; This is all my property, said he to them, that I brought from King Numan : I have now found it at Antar's, so carry it away to your master's, Prince Cais, and I will give you a good share of it. As soon as the slaves entered the habitations to plunder the goods, the women began to scream out ; but they seized the chests and all that was hung upon cords ; so the maids and the slaves made an uproar, shoving each other upon the ground. When Antar heard these screams, he entered the tents, resolved to ply his sword among both chieftains and slaves. But King Zoheir seeing the affair become more serious, and the disturbances more furious, began to be much alarmed, and as it was near the close of the day, he cried out to his son Cais, Take away your friend Rebia, and order him to depart from us, and to go down to the barren desert : let him not kindle dissensions among the Arabs, and make us to become a common proverb. Do you too, Shas, go to Antar, and send him away without delay, and let there be no more said to us

on the subject. Cais repaired to the tents, and checking Rebia, prohibited any further tumult. So likewise did Shas and Malik; they sought the hero Antar, and when they joined him, they saw death glancing from his eyes: they stopped him with gentle expressions. O Aboolfawaris, said Shas, truly your separation from us is like the separation of souls from bodies, but no one can avert the decrees of the Almighty, his orders must be obeyed. Emigration is the most advisable plan for you: bear this event patiently, and act honourably. Do not be too much distressed, my cousin; all you desire in this world is Ibla, and she will be with you. My father will certainly repent of this deed, and calamities and horrors will descend upon him; and as to this property Rebia has taken away, it will revert to you after kissing your feet and your hands; for they will all stand in need of you. Had I known, said Antar, that this business between us would have come to this pass, I would have put Rebia to death, and had succeeded in all my wishes; but now his property has come to light, and he has it, and out of respect to you, I have not been able to do him any harm.

Antar took leave of Shas and Malik, his distress and agitation being extreme. He ordered the slaves to fasten the howdahs on the camels; they did all he told them, and they loaded them with the baggage and the families, and they left not a halter behind. They then departed, traversing the wilds

and the wastes, the plains and the mountains, amounting in all to two hundred and fifty famed warriors, one hundred and fifty belonging to the Carad division, and one hundred forming the party of Oorwah. As to Basharah, they bound up his wounds, and raised him on a tall camel, whilst Rabiath accompanied the women. The party proceeded till midnight, when Antar, Oorwah, and fifty horsemen alighted, saying to his father and his uncles, Do you go on ahead with the women. But he and Oorwah mounted at daylight and galloped over the plains till they came to the pastures of the tribe of Fazarah: the sun was just risen, and the cattle were grazing. Antar rushed upon them, and drove away all the he and she camels, and the high-priced horses that belonged to the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, and when they had launched into the desert, Send on the plunder with thirty horsemen, said Antar to Oorwah; do you stay with me, that we may encounter the troops that will come upon us, with these twenty men. Oorwah did accordingly; the thirty went forward with the plunder, Antar and Oorwah slowly following them. As soon as the intelligence of the seizure of their cattle reached the tribe of Fazarah, they all mounted, but Hadifah was still weak from his fall, and was incapable of riding. The troop marched off in number five hundred, and with them four of Rebia's brothers. They went on till they overtook Antar, who, when he saw the horsemen, and heard their

shouts, turned upon them, and met them, and in less than an hour he had slain numbers of them, and wounded all four brothers. Oorwah and his people also slew those who were destined to die that day, piercing their chests with the points of the spear; extinction and perdition fell on the tribe of Fazarah. Antar smote off heads and skulls, and despatched the horsemen to the mansions of annihilation, crying out: Ye filthy Arabs, wherever ye go, Antar is behind ye: we are the persons who have taken the property of our enemies; who will now deliver you from our attack? Know, my cousins, said Haml, there is between Antar and the family of Zeead a most implacable animosity, and every one that interferes in it is destroyed and slain; and had I been aware that it was Antar who had seized the cattle, I would not on any account have gone out against him. So he turned his horse about, and he and the rest returned home, abandoning the family of Zeead. When Antar had taken possession of as many baggage-camels as he desired, he drove them on before him, and they all proceeded together till they overtook the cattle, and pursued the journey to Rikaya beni Malik, where the family of Carad had alighted, who, when they saw Antar's dust, mounted and saluted him, and seeing all the he and she camels he brought with him, they were greatly delighted. Here they halted to repose from their fatigues, and consult about the spot where they should fix their residence. I must, said Antar, go to the land of

Irak, and must labour in the utter destruction of the tribe of Shibān. But, said Shedād, O my son, do you not fear King Numan? No! exclaimed Antar, by the faith of an Arab, nor even the King of Persia, the lord of the balcony. O my brother, said Shiboob, if you wish to effect so much, and to battle with kings, come with me, and I will conduct you to the mountains of Radm and the valley of Raml, where ten men can defend themselves against the universe; and when we are in those mountains, you may engage warriors as many as you please, and the women will be secure. This is a most judicious arrangement, said Shedād, and a measure that cannot be found fault with; for I have heard of that spot, that the most timid can defend it, and its inhabitants must be safe. So they all agreed upon this point, and they reposed till the night was nearly passed, when they departed for that country.

Now this mountain was on the borders of Hidjaz, in the direction of Irak; it was stupendously lofty, and he who would look at it would imagine it was connected with the clouds; its summits rose so high towards the heavens, the sun could almost burn it with excess of heat and light: on its sides were caverns and caves, and trees, and fruits, and forests, the haunts of wild beasts and lions, and serpents. There was not a single road but windings and labyrinths that would bewilder the mind of man. It was like a strong fortress, and were ten men to

stand firm at the mouth of the defile, they would prevent the whole universe from reaching them ; for there was no other path but by that gorge and defile, and between it and the tribe of Shibān they were seven days journey.

When Antar heard this description from Shiboob, he immediately assented to his proposal, and they set off traversing the wilds and the wastes ; and he thus sang to them :

“ Where is there a friend of sound judgment and
“ faith, now that the greatest part of mankind are
“ false? Fortune has betrayed me even where I
“ had most trusted it! And can my efforts now
“ avert calamities from me? One day they demand
“ my exertions in the field of battle, and one day
“ they complain of my excesses. If the foe pur-
“ sued me, I liberated myself, however impetuous
“ was his pursuit ; and when my spear chooses, it
“ impedes every assault, and fate and my steed ex-
“ tricate me from every danger. But now, O hea-
“ vens! shall I succeed? or will the enmity of my
“ adversaries prevail? My horse, when the dust of
“ battle inclosed him on all sides, sprang against
“ the thrusts of the tribes. I will haste in pursuit
“ of the chase, though the parched earth should
“ rise in waves, or the onset of combatants environ
“ me. A party of Absians accompanies me, whose
“ high celebrity is extended over the deserts ; they
“ are beautiful, like lions in every spot, when the
“ blood of their enemies is clotted over their jaws.”

They continued their journey, travelling night and day, till they reached the mountain. The women alighted from the camels, and Antar entered the defile, accompanied by his father Shedad, his uncles, Oorwah and his companions; and when they had passed the entrance they perceived an intricate passage, and a valley abounding in forests, and they heard the roaring of wild beasts and the lions. It is impossible, said Antar, to dwell in this valley unless we burn down its sides with fire, otherwise there will be no security for our women against danger. So he ordered the slaves to light a fire in the forests, and they did so: and before evening the flames played in all quarters: the wild beasts were frightened and fled away, and dispersed. This continued for five days, and the snakes and the serpents were burnt. On the sixth day the flames ceased to blaze, and they entered the valley, and all danger was removed from them. Before sunset the tents were extended out, and the women and families entered: the mountains re-echoed their voices. And they soon became familiarized to their new abode, forgetting their native home, and their former friends and neighbours. Three days after, said Antar to his father, now that our property and families are in security, and that we have no occasion to harbour any fear of the Arabs, I am anxious to proceed against the tribe of Shibān, and punish them for their conduct: I must drive away their cattle, and take their families captive. We are few in number,

my son, said Shedad, and far away from home, and if we separate from our wives and families we cannot secure them from our foul foes. This is not to be dreaded, said Antar, for all our enemies are ahead of us, and we are in quest of them, they are not seeking us. My son, said Shedad, with how many horsemen do you intend to go against Shibani? A hundred brave fellows will be sufficient, replied Antar; the remainder I will leave with you. That is not right, said Oorwah, for the Shibanians are very numerous, particularly when Mooferridj shall return. That tribe cannot consist of less than five thousand bridles, besides confederates and neighbours; my opinion is we should set out from hence with one hundred and fifty men, leaving one hundred behind, and with this indeed we shall be undertaking a hazardous enterprise. Antar left with the families a hundred horsemen under the command of his father, and recommending them to be careful and vigilant, he and Oorwah departed with a hundred and fifty, fearless of the approach of death, and undaunted at fate even when it descends, for they were all bold intrepid fellows, and were also of the tribe of Abs and Adnan; and when Antar stopped on the road, his heart recollecting all his anxieties, he burst out thus:

“ Calamities extend their arms against me; they
“ oppose me, but I have resisted them. Vicissitudes
“ of fortune stop and slumber, for my courage has
“ drawn aside their mantle. Contend not with a

“man whose deeds the boldest warriors have ex-
 “perienced in the contest ; whose steed has stamped
 “over the land of his enemies when he drenched
 “their dwellings with blood. Woe to the tribe of
 “Shiban ! I have visited it, and dearly purchased
 “war stretched out its arm. Dust rose on high,
 “and its ocean swelled, and the bickering blade
 “darted forth its lightnings. My spear plunged
 “into their entrails, and burst through their armour
 “and their ribs. Their women arose in lamentations
 “for their husbands, who groaned in the agonies of
 “death. O Ibla ! for love of thee I feel a kindling
 “flame ; I have its anguish in the very folds of my
 “bowels. On the day of my separation the fire of
 “my spirit burst out, rocks even would have feared
 “it. O Ibla, oft as the raven of the desert pours
 “its plaintive note, to hear it in the dead of night
 “fills my heart with sadness. I have quitted my
 “home, and there are my neighbours, but their
 “cupidity has cut off my society from them. Soon
 “shall they see infamy when the horses of death
 “rush out upon them. I am the son of Shedad
 “who covets exaltation, and my ambition soars
 “above them. Soon shall my lasting celebrity be
 “sung, and in its report shall warriors feel the
 “highest pleasure.”

Antar continued his verses till Oorwah and his
 people were greatly pleased, and Oorwah was all
 astonishment. They travelled on towards Shiban,
 and death appeared easy and insignificant to them.

But Mooferridj, when he returned from his services in Persia, was very happy; he brought with him wealth fire could not have consumed. On his way home he stopped with King Numan, and staid as his guest for three days, and he related to him all that had happened to him in the cities of Khorasan. On the fourth day Mooferridj departed, seeking the land of Shiban, very anxious to revisit his native land; and when he reached his country, and his uncle Malik, son of Hosan, knew of his arrival, he went out to meet him, and congratulated him on his safety. Mooferridj alighted, quite delighted at his return home, and before even inquiring about his wife, he asked for Basharah. O my cousin, said Malik, son of Hosan, Basharah has reverted to his base origin, and he has done a deed no one ever did before. What has he done, my cousin? demanded Mooferridj. Know then, my cousin, said Malik, that your slave Basharah did not remain above twenty days after your departure, when he feigned having received a letter from you, stating, O Basharah, take away all my property and my treasures, and deposit them in the mountain of Radm and the valley of Raml, for I have suffered insupportable distresses in the service of the Persian monarch, and I am in the most deplorable condition. It is my intention to escape by flight if I find an opportunity. So he loaded every article in the magazines on the backs of the camels, and since then I have heard nothing of him, and I have had no

traces of him till lately, when a messenger came to me from Rebia, saying, Your slave Basharah is with Antar, and has restored to him his cousin Ibla. Antar has realized all his expectations, and has delivered over to him all the property he took away. He is now established with Antar in perfect happiness and contentment of heart, and he has done all this on account of his beloved Rabiāt, a base-born girl. I am going to King Numan, and I shall acquaint him with this circumstance; but now here you are, so do what you deem best. At hearing this the eyes of Mooferridj turned red, and he clasped his hands one within the other in excess of rage and passion, exclaiming, O Malik, did we not murder Ibla, and did not the slave conceal her in the desert? How then has she appeared amongst the tribe of Abs and Adnan? As to that, said Malik, I comprehend it not. But Sinan, son of Abdoolazi, happened to be present; he was a knight of Shiban, and their champion when they were surprised by assaults night or day; Know, said he, O Mooferridj, that your slave Basharah did not slay Ibla as you ordered him, but he deceived you by his tale; he waited till the coast was clear for him, when he seized all your property, and repaired to the slave, a bastard like himself, where he leads a life of ease and comfort. Basharah shall do such deeds as this, exclaimed Mooferridj, when I am asleep or swathed in my winding-sheet, but as long as I can mount on the back of a steed and have

about me five thousand horsemen of Shibān, and behind me one like King Numan, my property shall not be pillaged; no one shall venture to dishonour my family. Send for your allies, cried Sinan, and those in whom you confide in your difficulties and your relaxations; lead us to the tribe of Abs that we may extirpate every vestige of them, and ravage their country, and level their boundary-marks with the ground, and leave not one of them to report the news, having first put to death their slave Antār. This would not be proper, said Mooferridj, for King Numan wishes to connect himself by marriage to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and to wed Mooted-jerede, King Zoheir's daughter; he has demanded her, and if we proceed against them without his orders, and execute such deeds upon them, he may blame us and be angry. But my opinion is that I should go to Numan and acquaint him with all these circumstances, and then he will send a message and liberate my property for me, my he camels and my she camels, and will give me directions to march against my enemies. Thus will we depart under his commands, and will slay Zoheir, and Antār his slave; we will exterminate his horsemen and his troops, we will capture every thing, and make prisoners the high and low, and we will not suffer our property to be plundered, or that slave Basharah to triumph over us. Do as you please, said Sinan; lead us whithersoever you choose, and we will gratify your wishes.

Each returned home and renewed his vows to his wife and family. But Mooferridj was so irritated at what had happened he could not stop longer than that day. He returned to King Numan, and in his heart there blazed a fire of rage against Basharah, and when he reached Hirah he rushed into the presence of King Numan like one frantic, on account of the loss of his property. But Numan was amazed at his speedy return. Is it well with you, Mooferridj? said he. No! he replied, infamy and misery! And he told him what had happened to him through his slave Basharah during his absence, and how he had seized all his property and possessions, and had repaired to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and was now established with Antar, son of Shedad. Did not you and Rebia, exclaimed Numan, inform me that you had assassinated Ibla, and had divided her property? Yes, said he, but we were not witnesses to her murder. We delivered her over to Basharah, and ordered him to put her to death, and bury her in the sand, and since that we knew nothing about it. Do not distress yourself, said Numan, for all you possessed shall revert to you, and the man who protected your slave shall be brought bound before you, for I am at this moment resolved on sending to King Zoheir to demand his daughter in marriage, and truly Rebia promised me to do so for me, but now indeed the affair is more serious in consequence of what has happened to you. At the instant he wrote

a letter to King Zoheir couched in these terms: Know, O King Zoheir, head of the tribes, that it is incumbent on us to improve the state of the Arabs. It has reached me that your slave Antar has quitted the condition of servitude, and that you have extended to him your protection, and that you style him as you style your cousins. It would be advisable for you to pursue the established customs of the Arabs, and not bring down upon yourself destruction. You must order Antar to restore Mooferridj his slave, and all his property, and arrange this affair with him to our satisfaction, otherwise we shall punish him according to his acts, and shall send him back to tend camels and sheep. After this demand the marriage-settlement of your daughter Mootejerede as much as you please, that we may send it to you. Do not send this messenger back but with a suitable reply, and act like a wise, prudent man, or you may repent of what you do.

He despatched his letter with a courier, who traversed the wilds and the sand-hills till he reached the tribe of the noble Abs, and he happened to arrive just two days after Antar's departure, so he came to King Zoheir, and saluting him, delivered to him the letter. He opened it and read it, and understood its contents. O Arab, he replied, your master mentions something about taking from Antar the property belonging to the tribe of Shiban. That man is no longer under my subjection that I can command him on any point; for between him and

us there have arisen troubles and dissensions. He quitted us two days ago, he and his uncles, and all the tribe that was connected with him. We have heard he has taken the road to Irak; had he remained, the two tribes would have been annihilated. In a short time he will be a neighbour of King Numan's in some direction, so let him gain information of him, and let him do as he pleases with him. But, moreover, we have no daughter fit for marriage; and had I a daughter I should not send her into a foreign land, and I shall not let any one have authority over her; and with this answer there is no occasion for a letter.

He gave him a robe of honour, and sent him to a house of entertainment. But the messenger declined, and retraced his steps in a great rage, and he did not stop traversing the deserts till he reached Hirah. He came before the king, and told him what had passed. His wrath and indignation were extreme; his passion blazed and flamed. If I do not degrade him, he cried, may I never possess his daughter! I must positively slay every one of them: I will destroy the whole tribe, every warrior of them. As to Antar, he must be heard of in some of the lands, and he sent the Arab and the Persian in quest of him. He afterwards requested his brother's attendance, whose name was Mozeed, but the Arabs surnamed him Prince Aswad (black prince). He was a shedder of blood; of excessive pride and arrogance; immense in form and bulk. He was

like a strong tower, and could receive on his chest a thousand horsemen in the field; and when he appeared before King Numan, the latter informed him of the news he had received, and communicated King Zoheir's answer, and that he had refused him his daughter in marriage. Aswad smiled—the smile of fury and indignation. O King, he cried, you are too mild and easy with your foes, and you excite the Arabs against you. A king must keep up the respect and awe of his station, or his supremacy will be subverted. It would be right to send me against King Zoheir, to devastate his country, and overthrow his troops and armies, and capture his wife and sons, and I will bring the whole with me into your presence, that you may have them at your disposal; otherwise you will be an object of shame far and near, and the Arabs will say King Numan demanded in marriage King Zoheir's daughter, who would not give his consent to his being her husband. This representation increased Numan's anger and wrath, and immediately he equipped his brother with ten thousand horsemen of the tribes of Lakhm and Djuzam, and directed him to set out. As soon as Aswad had departed, King Numan cared no more about searching for Antar, but continued every day to ride round the town with his attendants, and the chiefs of his government, together with Mooferridj.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was on the fourth morning after Aswad's departure, they roamed far into the desert, when lo! a dust arose, rolling from the direction of Shibān. In an hour the dust was divided and split, and its blackness was converted to a piebald hue, and under it appeared a troop of horse in full retreat, and horsemen scattered about in great disorder. At this, King Numan's alarms gave way to security; for they were shouting out, Save us! save us! King of the age: protect us from this calamity of day and night.

Mooferridj advanced to ascertain who they were, and lo! they were his own horsemen—his own cousins, and his own tribe. What has befallen you? said he; and what mortal has thrown you into this confusion? Antar, cried they all, came down upon us; last night he surprised us in the tents; he made our wives widows, and our children orphans; he seized what he pleased, and left what he pleased.

Mooferridj dashed his fists against his forehead; all patience, and even his senses, vanished. Well! at last he cried, with how many horsemen did he come against you, that he has treated you in this manner? O Chief, they replied, we only saw him with a few attendants.

Then said King Numan, whilst the world seemed obscure in his eyes, Tell us by what road he is gone. By God, said they, O King, we were like drunken men, and had not the senses of women. We should say he was actually in our rear, and that he was pursuing our very footsteps; but should not assistance reach us by the close of the day, indeed it will be evident, that Antar has captured all our families, and has taken the road of the mountains of Radm, and the valley of Raml. By the faith of an Arab, cried Numan, I will seek him out, were he even to mount up to the skies; and I will abandon all the free-born women of Abs to be purchased as slaves. But, to soothe the heart of Mooferridj, he continued, do not be uneasy at what has happened. Set out to-morrow for the mountains with the Shibanians, and take as many Arabs as you please; but if you vanquish this accursed slave, do not put him to death, bring him to me, him and his uncles, that I may hang them all at the gate of the city. Sinan was present: O King, by thy munificence, he cried, were I and Mooferridj not afraid of your reproaches, we had not brought this event upon ourselves.

They returned to Hirah, and having consulted about this important crisis till morning dawned, Mooferridj assembled the fugitives and his companions, amounting in all to a thousand horsemen, with whom he set out for their own country, whilst a flame was raging in his heart against Antar. Nu-

man also was desirous of going with them, with the horsemen of Lakhm and Juzam. No, no ! said Mooferridj, it is not an affair to require your interference ; and when he reached his own home, he saw the whole country ruined and plundered, and some few tents on the summits of the hills, and the women weeping and wailing. At this catastrophe his anguish increased : he inquired for his own wife and family, but could find no one to give him any information about them. Thus was his calamity heightened, and his misfortune increased, and so great was his affliction, he could not remain there above an hour, but set out with his brave army for the mountains of Radm, following Antar's track.

But Antar, having quitted the mountains as we described, continued his journey over the wilds and wastes, till he came near to the tribe of Shiban. He arrived early in the morning, and alighting at some retired spot, he sent Shiboob to gain intelligence.

Shiboob darted forth as a bird on the wing, and returned about mid-day, saying, O son of my mother, there are not in the dwellings more than a thousand horsemen. How is that ? said Antar. Mooferridj, replied Shiboob, returned from the King of Persia full of joy and delight ; but when he heard that Basharah had seized his property (for his cousin Malik, son of Hosan, had given him every information in consequence of Rebia having acquainted him by a message, that you had regained Ibla, and that all his property was in your hands) ; he suffered what

never happened to any one before. He instantly returned to King Numan to report this intelligence, and to consult about an expedition against the tribe of Abs, and to take vengeance on them. In the excess of his resentment occasioned by this catastrophe, he said to his cousin, Never will I drink of wine, till I can assuage my heart on that base-born Antar ; and truly that tribe since his departure are all quite at a loss what to do, they seem careless of misfortunes, and are asleep, and feel secure from every calamity. The most advisable plan is, that you should rush upon the Shibanians under the cover of the night ; and when you are near the tents, divide into three bodies, and trample down the whole tribe under the hoofs of your steeds. Thus will you attain your ends ; thus will you succeed in all your projects.

By the faith of an Arab, exclaimed Antar, you have advised well. So he immediately mounted, followed by his men, and Shiboob preceded them like the northern blast till the day was spent, and night came on with impenetrable obscurity. The lights of the tribe shone upon them ; but the night was utter darkness as it vaulted over the two horizons. They formed into three divisions, and shouted out in every direction : they poured down among the tents and dwellings, and plied their spears and their swords among the Shibanians. The east and the west were in commotion. The whole region was in convulsion ; the country trembled beneath them ;

the warriors started from their pillows; the hearts of the maidens palpitated; the virgins were made captives, and the horsemen expected to become prisoners. The darkness and obscurity stupefied their senses; all their movements and attempts were thwarted. The coward found no hole to creep out at: the horsemen sought relief from the pressure of the field of battle: the King of Death was firm in grasping souls. The sword continued its execution till the night became illumined, and the morning dawned in its brilliancy: the Absians were still engaged; their garments were as if painted with blood.

It had been indeed a most dreadful night: but Antar acquired all the glory and the honour; and he arose lord of the land of Shiban, master of their property and their women. He repaired to the habitations of their chiefs, such as Mooferridj, and Sinan, and Malik, and all the head men of the tribe; where he captured their wives, and drove away their daughters and children, slaying their cuckolded husbands. He took three of Mooferridj's wives prisoners, and four of his cousin's daughters, all of whom were most accomplished females. Oorwah and his people, and the family of Carad, obtained all the noble steeds and camels, and they departed for the mountains of Radm, leaving their enemy's country ruined, and all its vicinity destroyed; and they continued their march till between them and their friends there was only one day's journey.

So in the morning they came near the country

whose mountain sides had been burnt; when Antar spied out ahead a tremendous dust increasing upon them, and a lofty cloud of sand rising over them. Do you see that dust? said Antar to Oorwah, what can there be beneath it? Oorwah extended his ken towards it, and he perceived a dust approaching, rising to an immense height; it augmented, and the black column was advancing upon them. O Champion of the Absians! said Oorwah, I do indeed perceive a towering dust coming towards you. I think it must be some booty that God has sent to you. Let the horses be rested, said Antar, after their hot march. So they rested them, whilst the men prepared their warlike weapons, and fixed their spears. Antar stationed forty to take charge of the property, and the remainder advanced like stern lions, in number one hundred and ten horsemen. They marched on till the dust came near to them, when they heard issuing from it loud screams and tumultuous shrieks, every thing proving some dreadful disaster and calamity; and the general cry was, O by Abs! O by Adnan! who will protect the Absian women? who will release their captive females?

As soon as Antar heard these clamorous voices, he shuddered. We are ruined, O Ebe ool Ebyez! he cried; good God! what Arabs can have overpowered us, and brought this misfortune upon us? Who can have dared to insult us, lions of the dens as we are?

Now the cause of all this was Rebia, who as soon

as he returned to the tribe of Fazarah, and heard that Antar had plundered his property, and had driven away his horses and camels, went to Hadifah, gnawing his hands from very passion. O Ebe Hidjar ! said he, how careless you have been of us this time ! and how you have failed in protecting us ! and we are your neighbours. O Rebia, said Hadifah, had I not been much debilitated by the effects of the fall, I would not have failed in protecting your property in this emergency. I did not know it was Antar that had made this predatory assault, or I would not have been kept away from him, even had my life tasted of horrors ; but I imagined they were some rapacious Arabs ; so my brother and yours went out, and with them a body of horsemen, whom I enjoined to make every exertion in settling the business, and to bring back the horses and property ; but they returned routed and disgraced, and when I learnt this circumstance, I became as if drunk without wine : but if I do not overtake that Antar, and gratify my hatred in his death, I shall die without the affliction of any disease. O my cousin, said Rebia, I cannot possibly remain here after this degradation.

So they all made preparations from that day, amounting in all to seven hundred horsemen, all well-trained warriors, and they set out in pursuit of Antar, in despite of the prohibitions of the Sheikh Beder, for they would not listen to him, but traversed the barren wastes and wilds. Know that we

are proceeding against the consent of our father, said Haml to Hadifah, and we have rebelled against the Sheikhs of our tribe. I fear this expedition will terminate ill, so that we shall incur the reproaches of our countrymen, and not one of us will be able to reside among them. My advice is, that we should pass in our way to the tribe of Marah, our ally, in which we confide in our difficulties and our relaxations, and take with us their champion Zalim, son of Harith, with a party from their clan and noble warriors. Then indeed we shall succeed in our projects and attempts, and shall take our vengeance on that Antar, even had he with him the tribes of Themood and Aad. This would be a great disgrace said Hadifah, that we, who boast of our descent and rank—that we, exalted among the Arab chieftains, should not be able to redeem our rights from a wretch of a slave, but must incite against him the horsemen of other tribes.

HamI had been induced to address his brother on this subject on account of the dread he felt in his heart of Antar. Rebia joined him, for he knew that this knight whom HamI had mentioned would accomplish all their desires. Now this Zalim was a knight of the tribes of Marah and Dibyan, and he was a great object of astonishment in those days; and in addition to the superiority he assumed over the other Arab chiefs, on account of his extreme intrepidity, he boasted of a sword he had inherited from his father and ancestors. It was called Zool-

hyyat (endued with life), for when it was unsheathed, it was impossible for any one to fix his eyes on it, on account of the extraordinary effect and imaginary sensations it produced. It was said that it had been the sword of the great Jobaa, son of King Himyar, who was formerly monarch of the universe: and when it fell upon a rock, it would cleave it in two; and did it encounter steel, it shattered it; and when it moved, it glittered and sparkled, and over its sides there crept the wavy forms of biting snakes. Zalim was so delighted with it, that when he went to bed, he had it within his arms, and by day he was never apart from it. It is thus described in this distich:

“In no trouble, in no adversity do I fear death,
“when it confronts me; for how can I dread the as-
“saults of death, and Zoolhyyat is glittering in my
“right hand?”

So when Haml mentioned Zalim, Rebia immediately coincided with him. At last they brought over Hadifah to their views, and travelled on till they reached the tribe of Marah. There they alighted, and were hospitably received. Rebia informed Zalim of the circumstance of Antar, and the troubles they had endured. In the excess of his pride, Zalim smiled; By the faith of an Arab, said he, the tribe of Abs deserves to be degraded on account of their conduct towards this despicable, insignificant slave, and all the disgraceful events that have befallen you are owing to your Chief Zoheir.

It was he who admitted him to the rank and consideration of an Arab. I am not unwilling to attend you on this expedition, neither does the danger or trouble annoy me. I am only distressed on account of my sword Zoolhyyat, that it should be contaminated with the blood of slaves, the offspring of carcasses.

Then having entertained them for three days, he set out with them, accompanied by five hundred noble horsemen on celebrated steeds, eagerly pursuing Antar, and continually demanding intelligence of him in the deserts and the cities, till they heard that he was in the mountains of Radm, and the valley of Raml. May God curse the father of his beard, and may he be afflicted with unspeakable calamities ! Does he think thus, exclaimed Zalim, that mountains can protect him from me, or that the defile can defend him ? By the faith of an Arab, verily will I make him taste of the wine of misfortunes. They proceeded in the right direction, having obtained a trusty guide. But as to Amarah, the world could not contain him, for now he felt secure that Antar would at any rate be slain, and that Ibla would console him for all his sorrows ; and when they came near to the valley and the two mountains (there being only two days between them), a slave belonging to Rebia met them as he was seeking the land of Hidjaz. My masters, said the slave, in answer to their inquiries, know that Antar is gone against the Shibanians, with one

hundred and fifty brave fellows: and there only remain one hundred more to protect the wives and women; and had not he and Shiboob been absent, I could not have escaped.

When they heard this, they were much delighted: Truly, said Hadifah, the business has turned out as you wished, and every difficulty has been rendered easy. Arabs, cried Zalim, how have we gained our point, if Antar does not fall, and is not vanquished? By the faith of an Arab, our trouble is misspent, and our pains are only increased. O Chief, said Hadifah, we will content ourselves with capturing their wives, and we will return home: Antar indeed will be safe, but if we do not kill him, we shall kill many of his party. O Hadifah, said Rebia, let us first carry off the goods and families we shall find in the mountains, and then continue the pursuit of Antar, wherever he may be, and when we have extirpated him, we will go to King Numan, and will represent to him the necessity of his sending his brother Aswad to King Zoheir, to drive him into his presence, and force him to give his daughter to him. I will give Ibla in marriage to my brother Amarah, and will make a marriage-feast, the equal of which no chiefs ever prepared: then we will return home, and be quiet and comfortable. Truly, said Amarah, I am of your opinion on this point, O Rebia; for I am quite sure Ibla was only created for me, and her charms will only coalesce with mine.

They continued their journey without delay till they reached the mountain, and the dust they occasioned appeared like the black shades of night. The Absians that were reconnoitring soon discovered them, and immediately gave notice of the circumstance to the horsemen, and shouted through the mountains. Shedad and his brothers mounted with the hundred horsemen, and the whole land was in confusion with the screams of the women and maidens, whilst the men hurried out to the defile and pass, having first enveloped themselves in steel.

The horsemen of Fazarah soon came in sight, the troops divided, and they all made one universal shout, making the whole country tremble. They attacked the Absians like tall furious sea-monsters, headed by Zalim, as he poured forth the bellow of devouring lions, and drew out his Zoolhyyat. In a moment the parties encountered, and they exhibited their fury, shouting in the name of their fathers and ancestors, and struggling in the battle and the contest; the sharp-edged scimitars and long spears laboured among them, and foes and enemies exulted over them; but numbers multiplied upon the Caradians after they had engaged at the entrance of the strait, like brave men, who fear disgrace; and though difficulties increased upon this small party, they preserved the head of the defile, and plied the thrust and the blow. But when Zalim perceived that their courage still protected

them in that spot, he dismounted with a party of horsemen, and penetrated through the defile. There the battle began to rage—blood was spilt, and the fire of contention blazed till Zalim had slain seven of the Absians, and had driven the remainder into the valley.

Rebia and Hadifah, seeing what Zalim had done, also dismounted, followed by their party, and thus occupied the defile. But when the women perceived this calamity, they uncovered their heads and let fall their hair, and there was not one but was convinced of captivity and misfortune; and about mid-day the tribe of Fazarah effected their entrance; they bound the Absians as prisoners, and took possession of their women and property. They drove away the camels, and they all issued forth from the mountains. Basharah fell into the hands of Rebia, who gave him a cruel beating. Amarah reproached Malik, Ibla's father. You abandoned your family and your clan, said he, and you have followed the advice of this black slave, and these are some of his blessings that have now happened to you, and he will most certainly drown you in a sea of calamities.

Shedad heard this speech. O son of Zeead, he cried, let it suffice that you can abuse my son in his absence, for he would have brought down on you his severest punishments, and know that nothing will last, and he will assuredly come in this direction. Every one of ye will feel his frown—and

every one of ye will repent of this deed. This passed ; they pursued the tract of Antar, the women and children going before them, but Zalim staid behind with the chieftains of the tribes of Marah, and boasting of his arts, he thus exclaimed :

“ Is it thy teeth, O lovely girl, that smile, or is
“ it the lightning that draws its sword before me ?
“ Is it thy form, or the branch of the palm, that
“ waves to the zephyr, as it resembles the date-
“ tree ? O daughter of Aamir, do not disdain the
“ dust whose brightness gives brilliancy in the dead
“ of the night. If thou art ignorant of me, ask the
“ tribe of Abs, when I brandished my scimitar ;
“ I surprised their horsemen in the defile, my sword
“ cleft their flesh and their bones—I drove away
“ their women when I had reduced their virgins
“ to consternation and mourning. How should a
“ worthless slave protect the wives of the noble, or
“ be able to preserve his engagements ? He shall
“ soon see, if he comes alive, that my sword can
“ act when death even is still : it is the destiny of
“ the world when crowds rush round our dwellings.
“ But what glory is there in this contest, that my
“ sword should descend upon a dastard slave !
“ Where in the combat is there one like me when
“ my scimitar flashes its fires ? All mankind lie
“ beneath my sword, and with me right and wrong
“ are confounded.”

When Zalim had finished his verses, the horsemen were delighted at his poetry and prose, and

extravagantly was he flattered by Rebia and the wretched Amarah. They continued their journey till the next day, about three hours after sunrise, when they met the hero Antar. Amarah happened to be in the van, looking at the women, and surrounded by a body of the tribe of Fazarah and Marah, and talking to Malik, son of Carad, till eyes fell upon eyes, and Antar's slaves shouted out on his arrival; he heard the screams of the women, and his indignation became most violent: he attacked the family of Zeead, and pierced the first through his chest, and the barb started out between his shoulders; he urged on, and struck the second, and he rolled him over in the sand. As soon as the horsemen saw this accident, their reason deserted them, and they felt assured this must be Antar. So they shrunk to the rear, the despairing Amarah at their head, crying out, Fly, my cousins! The slaves of the family of Carad crowded together upon them, and plied their sharp swords among them, shouting out, Hey! Antar is come against ye, and to-day will he requite you for your deeds towards the women and children. In a short time the men were all released from captivity. Antar advanced towards Ibla, and saluted her; he also ordered Shiboob to release his father's women and his uncle's, whilst he and Oorwah went forwards with one hundred horsemen to meet the foe, leaving the remainder to protect the females.

Amarah came up to his brother Rebia and Ha-

difah, and meeting the troops, exclaimed as above, and the whole desert was in confusion. What is the matter with thee? asked Rebia. What has happened to thee? What has appeared unto thee under the black of the dust? Antar has appeared against us, they cried out, he is slaying our brothers and our cousins, and has come up with the women and the children, and taken the property, the camels, and the infants, and had he not been occupied with Ibla, he would not have left one of us alive, not a white or a black. Prepare your warlike weapons, cried Rebia, and be ready for the conflict. Zalim rejoiced in the news, and he was much delighted at Antar's arrival; he gave the reins to his horse, and he galloped after the horsemen, the heroes and warriors following him. When lo! Antar appeared before them like a lion in armour, and as his companions followed him, he cried, Ye sons of ordure, you have pursued us from your homes, and have gained over to fight against me the tribes of Marah and Dibyan, and you conceive yourselves secure from the calamities of day and night. He instantly unsheathed his sword and assaulted—the desert was in tumult—all promiscuously crowded—attack and defence was the word—swords made hot work—the coward sought to fly, but found no way to escape. The irresistible brave stood firm, and the scimitars neither spared friend nor foe. The blows of Antar fell more powerful than the stones of an engine; he dispersed whole troops, and mangled them dreadfully;

he encountered Zalim and Hadifah in the middle of the field of carnage, and they were also eager in quest of him; but Hadifah being the nearest to Antar, thrust at him with his spear, saying with a loud voice, Take that, thou son of a slave, I am Hadifah, the son of a free-born woman. When Antar perceived the thrust directed towards him, he parried it off very skilfully; he roared at Hadifah, and turning round the barb of his spear, he struck him with the butt end, and sent him rolling over on his head. He then sought Zalim, and wanted to treat him as he had done Hadifah, but Zalim smote Antar's spear and broke it, and just as he attempted to close with him, Antar howled, and he was horror-struck; he smote him with the remnant of the spear on his chest, and it palsied him, the end of the spear grazed on Zalim's elbow-bone; it paralysed every nerve, and forced him to let go his sword; Antar rushed upon him, he grappled him, and seized him by the rings of his corslet, clung to him, and took him prisoner, and gave him over to his comrades, wretched and degraded! That is right, cried Shiboob, seize these cuckolds, that I may bind them fast; come on! now to the others. Antar commenced the conflict, and he pierced the chests of the combatants; he exhibited all his powers, and he extended the heroes right and left. Shiboob in the mean time had secured Zalim and Hadifah. Oorwah and his people, with his uncles who had been released, accompanied

Antar. Rebia being alarmed, lest he should be disgraced and overwhelmed, had nothing for it but to scamper off and escape. Antar made hot work in their rear, and the brave were irresistible in their assaults. Only one hundred escaped out of the thousand, and they were mounted on swift steeds. The tribe of Abs returned, and darkness obscured the land, whilst Antar stood before them, as if bathed in a sea of blood. Having collected the booty, they passed on, and early in the night they came near to the mountains, and by day-break they entered with the prisoners of Fazarah, and those of Marah and Dibyan, all bound fast with cords. The slave-women preceded them with the cymbals and dulcimers, and joy was universal among them. Early in the day they entered, and it was a most glorious morning for them; they pitched the tents and pavilions, and stretched the tent-ropes; but the happiest of the party was Basharah, whom Antar had released from the power of Rebia. But they had only been established one day in that valley, when the next morning the dust of the tribe of Shiban, with Mooferridj, arose upon them. The troops were extended right and left, and the warriors and heroes came forth. The Absians, as soon as they saw them, prepared for the engagement; the polished steel glittered in their hands, and the burnished armour flashed with the brilliancy of lightning. They rushed out of the defiles and pressed forward for the battle and the contest. When the

Shibanians saw them advancing, Do you see that black slave? exclaimed Mooferridj; how his presumption has overpowered his reason? he has even quitted the mountain, and intends to attack the tribe of Shiban and its five thousand warriors, and he has scarcely two hundred and fifty vagabond horsemen. The fault is not his, but the fault is with him who has obliged us to fight him, and that is Rebia, who was the cause of all this disturbance. Be not surprised at what Antar is doing, said Sinan, for truly he is anxious for the carnage of death. It happened that Rebia had decided on escaping at the first onset, so he fled till he reached the tribe of Shiban, and as soon as they recognised him, they asked what was the matter; he informed them of all that happened, and wept at the severity of his misfortunes. Comfort your mind and brighten up your eye, cried Mooferridj, for we are marching in quest of Antar, and we shall certainly overwhelm him, and reduce him to distress in his property and family. Mooferridj related to him the affair of Prince Aswad and his expedition against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and all the arrangements of his brother King Numan. So Rebia was consoled with this intelligence, and he returned with them that he might enjoy the spectacle of Antar's destruction, and release his brother Amarah from misery. For he saw their number amounted to five thousand, all warriors,

brave and intrepid, and with them was their celebrated knight Sinan, and they were marching under the orders of King Numan. By the faith of an Arab, said he to himself, Antar cannot escape this time. Thus they eagerly pressed their march till they approached the mountains of Radm, as we have mentioned, and Antar went out to meet them, as we have described. And Sinan said to Mooferidj, that Antar would certainly seek the contest. O Sinan, said Rebia, Antar is never fatigued, never harassed, and in his heart he is only anxious to meet you, and succeed in his attempts against you, and were you even to fill the plains and the mountains, he would still come out against you, and be only the more eager to encounter you, for he would be saying in his soul, that he would annihilate ye all, high and low, and that he would carry off your property and your plunder. When Sinan heard this, he roared and started forth in quest of Antar, thus exclaiming:

“Hast thou captured my women and seized my
 “property, bastard slave, thou camel-driver! Shall
 “I remain dispirited and in disgrace, and my sword
 “sparkle, brilliant and polished? My spear, when
 “I brandish it in the palm of my hand, will dive
 “through the strong-ribbed mountain. Shame, O
 “Fortune! that a slave should conquer, and the
 “chiefs and lords be discomfited! Were she im-
 “partial, this scum of men would not stride the

“ noble steeds. But, O daughter of my uncle,
 “ grieve no more, though the nocturnal vicissitudes
 “ have separated us ! As to fortune, it is two days
 “ sweet and one bitter ; and among men there are
 “ two sorts, the base and the noble. How many
 “ exalted tribes have I overwhelmed ! I have re-
 “ turned, and their warriors in captivity ; and how
 “ many flames of fire have I kindled with the edge
 “ of my sword on the chests of the noble com-
 “ batants !”

When the Shibanians heard Sinan’s harangue, and perceived that he was preparing for the slaughter, his men galloped forward, most desirous to release their wives and families, directing their spear points towards Antar, and one thousand were the number that followed him. Antar, being aware of their intent, took with him his father Shedad and his uncles Malik and Zakhmetuljewad, and Amroo, Ibla’s brother, and altogether thirty of the family of Carad. Stay here, said he to Oorwah, with these hundred horsemen and occupy Sinan, whilst I repulse the troop that accompanies him, and I will soon return to you. Antar made the attack against the thousand horsemen, and rushed down upon them, impetuous as a torrent ; he charged among them east and west, and overwhelmed them with thrusts and blows ; and he never dashed into a division, but he dispersed it, nor a troop but he crushed it ; and thus also acted his brother Shiboob, the dust-coloured dragon. He never se-

parated from his horse Abjer, but protected him from the blows of the warriors; whilst his father Shedad and the horsemen kept up a fierce conflict, and in less than an hour the troop retreated from the dust and the darkness, a hundred of them being slain, and more wounded. By the faith of an Arab, said Mooferridj, we have fallen into a most dreadful misfortune, we did not lay our account to this; in fact, thirty horsemen have been able to effect all this destruction, and the party, though only consisting of two hundred and fifty, will at this rate be equal to ten thousand, and we consist of only five thousand, and the remainder, how shall we answer them? My advice, cried Rebia, is, that you should attack with the tribe of Shibban, and overpower them with the horsemen, otherwise we cannot succeed; overtake your cousin Sinan, that Antar may not kill him in the field of battle. Mooferridj shouted out to his men, and they instantly unsheathed their swords, and brandished their spears, and the universe was in convulsion at their shouts. Above three thousand joined them in the assault, and in a formidable charge sought the defile and the mountain. At that time Antar had returned to his companions, and he found Sinan coming back with the tribe of Shibban, and with them Oorwah as his prisoner: a numerous host surrounded them. Now Sinan, when Antar left him, attacked the hundred horsemen, and assailed them with his sword; he routed them, and

made them retreat into the mountains, having slain thirty. He also resolved on penetrating into the defile, and releasing the women of Shibān; but Oorwah again assailed him, and prevented him; they fought for an hour, but Sinan saw his companions were cut up, and that only five hundred stood firm with him, the remainder having taken to flight, whilst others checked him from coming up with Antar. Aware of this disaster, and seeing how the shouts arose over him, his passion and fury increased; so he closed with Oorwah and grappled him, stopping all means of escape, and extending towards him his mighty arm, he seized him by the rings of his armour, and held him fast. Thus having taken him prisoner, and delivered him over to some of his men, he turned about to attack Antar, who was also in quest of him. He dispersed his horsemen and his troops, and as Sinan stretched out his spear at him, and cried out at him, and thrust at him, Antar smote the spear and shivered it: thus parrying him off till he came close to him, he pressed on him, and struck him with the flat of his sword, and tumbled him off his horse. Shiboob pounced on him and bound him fast, and tied his arms and his sides. As soon as the Shibānians saw this terrible event, they abandoned Oorwah cast upon the sand, and escaped by flight towards Mooferridj; the troops were all scattered and discomfited. Shouts arose on all sides, and the dust thickened to the east and to the

west. Antar cried out to the noble Absians; they were on the alert, and brandished their spears and their swords; the thrusts were incessant and overpowering, and the voice of the speaker was silenced: they seized each other by the chin and the throats, and every path and road was choked up with the warriors. But God prospered Antar and the wonders he did that day, as also his horsemen and tribe, and his father Shedad and his uncles.

Oorwah soon sprung again on the back of his horse, and allayed his heart upon the tribe of Shibban. The scimitar continued to cleave, and blood to flow, and men to rave and fall, till the day closed and was obscured, and night coming on, each division retired and separated. The tribe of Abs alighted at the entrance of the defile to guard it against invasion or surprise; but Antar ordered Shiboob to take Sinan to the valley, and tie him up with the other prisoners. The tribe of Shibban also alighted, and their ruin and rout was evident. Mooferridj endured more than ever went to the heart of man, on account of the capture of his cousin Sinan, and the destruction of so many of his horsemen. Thou mine of fraud and deceit, roared he at Rebia, by the faith of an Arab, had I thrust at Sinan my cousin for a whole day, I should never have gained my point against him, and never should I have been able to touch him, ere fatigue had enervated my arm; but this infernal slave has taken him prisoner in an instant, and truly I shall pass

this night in a state of stupefaction ; for if I go out against him, I shall become a scandal among the Arabs ; and if I do not attack him, we shall not succeed in our expectations. Take my advice, said Rebia, clothe yourself in brilliant steel to-morrow morning, and march your troops against him, and let not one of your companions remain behind ; smite their horsemen and warriors with the sword, till you drive them to the defile, and then enter after them ; thus will you succeed in your hopes ; and should every one of them slay ten of yours, and even more, you will then even have the advantage with the remainder. This, Rebia, is advice becoming you ! he replied, this is your sagacity ! your wit ! how ! shall we hasten the men upon Antar, and leave him to charge upon our flanks, and play upon us with his sword and his spear ? By the faith of an Arab, had not the day closed upon us, not a spot of ground would have been left for any one, but had turned his face to the desert and the waste. Thus they continued wrangling till the armies of obscurity departed. And as soon as it was day, the Shibanians started up ready for the fight and the contest ; they fixed their spears and prepared to exterminate lives. But the first who shone on the plain and the scene of blows and thrusts was Antar. He galloped and charged, and urged his Abjer to the theatre of contention, and thus expressed himself :

“ The morning of thrusts in the field of battle

“ (where wine is not put round in glasses), is dearer
“ to me than the varied amusements with the cup,
“ and the ewer, and the flowers. My wine is in-
“ deed that which gushes about the spear's point,
“ when the war-steeds trample. I am the slave, of
“ whom it shall be reported that I encountered a
“ thousand free-born heroes: my heart was created
“ harder than steel, how then can I fear sword or
“ spear? I have met the chargers, and I cared
“ not: I am raised above Arcturus, and the Lyre
“ or the Eagle: when the warrior beholds me, he
“ avoids me, his courage fails, and he flies. Ye
“ have indulged, ye people of Shiban, a thought,
“ but my horse and my perseverance have thwarted
“ your imagination. Ask Rebia of me when he
“ came against me with the chiefs of Beder. I
“ took their chiefs prisoners, and only quitted them
“ when I had dispersed them over every desert.
“ Here now I again come forth, and in you will I
“ appease my heart and allay my bosom; I will
“ seize the property of Ibla with my sword, and
“ the lord of the balcony shall acknowledge my
“ power.”

As soon as Antar had terminated this address, he sought the contest, and the flame was kindled afresh in his bosom. Mooferridj sprang on his horse's back, and being cased in his armour, he thundered down to the field of battle, and charging to and fro, exclaimed: Thou vile slave, it is disgraceful, infamous, and ignominious, to fight with thee!

But Antar sent forth a shout at him that would have split a stone. Mooferridj received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. They gave two yells, that excoriated the ears of their horses, and made every limb of the horsemen tremble. They commenced the engagement. Rebia was much alarmed for Mooferridj, that Antar should overpower him. It was not judicious in Mooferridj to go out against this devil, said he, and I fear some accident will happen to him. To which Malik, son of Hosan, replied, By the faith of an Arab, this calamity was all owing to you. Son of Zeead, had it not been for you, we should never have known this Antar, neither would our wives and children have been made captives; and as he was preparing to make an assault, lo! a yell arose from under the dust, and some one cried out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! I am the lover of Ibla, and I stand alone in the world! They all eagerly gazed at the dust, and behold Antar, who had taken Mooferridj prisoner, driving him as he would a camel. He gave him over to Shiboob, who bound him fast by the shoulders, and took him away to the other prisoners. Antar perceived that the Shibanians had dismounted, and were waving their spears and unsheathing their swords; but he was not to be intimidated at this. By the faith of an Arab, he exclaimed, I will put them all to the rout, and will not leave one to know whither he is going. Then shouting out to Oorwah and his father Shedad, he

selected fifty brave horsemen. Guard the entrance of the pass and defile, he cried, and he roared out to the troop that was with him, and they split the enemies troops into two parts, and made them drink of death. The horror and distress were excessive, and the day became like the night. They continued to plunge through the Shibanians till they came into their rear, where Antar, perceiving the horses running loose without their riders, said to his comrades, Collect them from right and left, and turn their faces towards their owners, then goad them on with the points of the spears, and they will trample down their own masters. So they separated towards the horses, and collected them all into one body, and sending forth a tremendous shout at them, goaded them with the points of their spears. A black cloud of dust arose; they plunged among the men on foot, and trod them down with the stamp of a camel, whilst the Absians roared at them from the interior of the valley. None escaped but those whose lives God had lengthened. Lucky was he whose horse speeded away with him and rushed over the waste and plains.

Malik, son of Hosan, was one of those who escaped, and also Rebia secured himself with a party of his people, and he was gnawing his hands through mortification and shame. O my cousins, all this has happened to us on account of this dog-devil, cried Malik to the Shibanians, pointing at Rebia; had it not been for him we had never known Antar

nor Ibla, nor one of the race of Abs. So come on and have at him. Thus saying, he made towards him, as Rebia also advanced to congratulate him on his safety, but Malik struck him with his spear through the shoulder, and it came out under his armpit, and hurled him off his horse on the ground, weltering in his blood, and he thought he had slain him. Thou son of a foul mother, cried he, all our misfortunes originate in your hatred towards that bastard slave. Moreover, the Shibanians put twenty of Rebia's party to death, and the remainder fled over the country. But as to Antar, he ordered them to open a way for the horse to the mountains, whilst he pursued the race of Shiban till he came up with Rebia. O Ebeool Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, dismount, go to him and bind him: truly his treachery has reverted on himself. Oorwah alighted and tied his arms, and as he was going to raise him on a horse, he opened his eyes, and recovering his senses, he saw Antar standing over his head. O my noble cousin, exclaimed the wretch, have some consideration for the relationship between you and me. Bind up my wounds, but tie not up my arms. I am almost dead, and indeed I sorely repent of all I have done to you. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, you shall never be in a situation to repent the foul deeds you have already done towards me. You only call me cousin when you have tumbled into some intolerable calamity. So they all returned to the mountains, and all the

party was relieved from sorrow, for their evening was more propitious than the morning. He placed Shiboob, and Jareer, and Basharah, as guards over the prisoners; and those that were most grievously afflicted and distressed were Mooferridj and Sinan, for Basharah was stationed to torment them.

Antar reposed that night in the most perfect delight with his friends and troops, till the obscurity being nearly dissolved, he assembled the chiefs, and as they were consulting, said Shedad to Antar, O my son, what have you resolved on doing with your prisoners? As to Zalim, and Mooferridj, and Sinan, I shall hang them; but as to Rebia, and the wretch Amarah, I shall detain them in bondage till they restore the property they took from Ibla. He arose instantly, intoxicated as he was; his head rested on Oorwah's shoulder, and he came to the door of the cavern where the prisoners were confined, and said to Shiboob, Raise up this cuckold, that I may hang him up on the summit of the mountains, and range these other fellows by his side. When the party heard this they felt certain of death. As to Amarah, he was almost dead already, and he remained fixed in stupefaction, for when he looked at Antar he saw his eyes red as coals. O Aboolfawaris, said Mooferridj, delay your work, for the end of violence is never praiseworthy. As to us, you first took our property, captured our families, slew our men, and devastated our country; what, therefore, is our crime that we have merited death

and hanging? And what crime, said Antar, can be more enormous than this? you seized my property, you captured the daughter of my uncle, you even attempted to slay her, so I must absolutely extirpate the tribe of Shiban. It was your cousin Rebia, said Mooferridj, who told me to do so, and am I to be adjudged deserving of extermination, root and branch? But know that the property that I took from your uncle's daughter is now with King Numan: truly the affair is well known, and the secret now quite public, for Rebia sold the tiara and turban for he and she camels, and I placed my slave in deposit in the land of Irak. It will be well for you not to be too hasty with me, that I may contrive some means to liberate it, and restore it all to you; and thus I may rescue my person and my wife out of your hands. Do what you please with your cousin Rebia, and if you have any doubts as to what I have said, and think I am deceiving you, I can tell you still further particulars. On what subject can you give me any intelligence? demanded Antar. Know, O Aboolfawaris, said Mooferridj, that King Numan has sent his brother Prince Aswad against King Zoheir with ten thousand horsemen, and he has engaged to drag before him King Zoheir in his grasp on account of us, and on account of his daughter Mootegerede. I am convinced King Zoheir must fall, and will abandon his country to destruction. But if you proceed to violent measures with us, King Numan will hear of

it; he will march against you with troops and armies, and will make you food for the birds and beasts. As soon as Antar heard this he changed his resolution; And when did Aswad set out on his expedition? asked he. About five days before our departure, said Mooferridj, and doubtless now he is in your country. At hearing this the light became dark in his eyes. Alas! then the tribe of Abs is disgraced among the Arabs, he cried: I must and will root out every vestige of that King Numan. I have not forgotten King Zoheir's kindnesses, said he to Oorwah, and I must expose my existence for his sake, for I bear him no grudge. O Champion of the Absians, said Basharah, by the faith of an Arab, with respect to Prince Cais and his brothers, and their father King Zoheir, you are considered as much as his eldest son Shas; but no one estranged his heart against you but Amarah, and that ordure-born Rebia. May God curse your father and mother, said Amarah, how often do you talk to him of us, and make him think of us? Let him alone; let his intoxication pass off, and may his person and the sight of him ever be absent from us! Hey! O Amarah, said Antar, he who wishes to be Ibla's husband should not be a coward like you, and one that fears death and affliction. Who is he, exclaimed Amarah, that wishes for Ibla, or to hear her mentioned? and he who has heard of her would stop his hearing for ever. Now, said Antar, that would not be right; but when I have returned with

that Aswad a prisoner, and have released King Zoheir and his sons from infamy and ignominy, I will requite ye all according to your deserts, and I will slay you all, high and low : and thus saying he quitted them. O comrades, cried Sinan, this black slave must be perfectly frantic, his senses must be disordered, to march from hence and meet with one hundred horsemen Prince Aswad with ten thousand warriors, all armed with spears ! I never in my life, said Mooferridj, saw a more fortunate fellow than this black slave, nor a more expert spearsman. By the faith of an Arab, said Amarah, should Antar meet Prince Aswad he will ride him the ride of a lion. Were his armies as numerous as the sands and the locusts, he will most assuredly bring him here pinioned.

But Antar, when he returned home, assembled the chiefs, and informed them of Aswad's expedition ; and I am resolved to go to King Zoheir's assistance, he added. O my son, said his father, we are here but two hundred and fifty men, and shall one like King Numan be our foe and antagonist ! How can we proceed against ten thousand horsemen, and abandon our wives and families ? As to our women, said Antar, there is no alarm about them ; no one will venture to approach this spot before the fugitives of the Shibanians reach King Numan, and inform him of what has happened to them ; he must then address the Arabs by letter, and we shall return hither before all that can have taken place. But I

have not come to this place, or rebelled against King Numan, but on having formed a proper estimate of mankind. I do not fear even the monarch of Persia, the lord of the balcony; therefore, how shall I fear ten thousand horse, or even a hundred thousand of the bravest? And he sent for Shiboob and said, Son of my mother, how many roads are there hence to our country? There are three, replied Shiboob. Where do they meet? said Antar. By the waters of the tribe of Akhrem and the great lake. Upon that he selected a hundred and fifty of the noblest Absians, and left one hundred to protect the property and the families, and recommending his uncle Malik and his son Amroo to take care of the prisoners, and to be on the alert night and day, he set out over the plains and deserts, Shiboob preceding him showing the way. Antar had his heart full of King Zoheir and the Absians, and as the journey lengthened, he thus expressed himself:

“ He who is ambitious of honour bears no malice,
“ and no exalted sentiments can exist in the mind
“ of the passionate. He who is a slave of a tribe
“ must not contradict them; he must endeavour to
“ soothe them and conciliate them when they are
“ angry. Formerly indeed I tended their camels,
“ but now I protect them when they are in affliction.
“ God has ennobled the tribe of Abs, and has en-
“ dowed them with virtues the Arabs possess not in
“ their nature. Their slave has left the warriors
“ overthrown in the dust, all in consternation and

“ in disgrace. Were I not to rescue them in
“ their adversities, I myself should not be safe, and
“ misfortune would not always fail me. If you
“ think, O Numan, my arm cannot reach you, for-
“ tune then has changed. There are serpents, and
“ their touch is soft in moving them round, but in
“ their fangs is death. To-day, O Numan, you
“ shall know what a youth will trample down thy
“ brother whom falsehood has encouraged. A youth
“ that plunges into the dust of battle with smiles,
“ and when he retires his spear’s point is dyed with
“ blood. If he draws the sword to enforce his
“ blows, the atmosphere is illumined, and the clouds
“ are rent asunder. The steeds are witness for me
“ how I dive among them, and that my thrusts are
“ like the sparks of a blazing fire. May God never
“ remove from my eyes the noble youths; warriors
“ when they alight, ennobled when they mount!
“ Lions of the den, but no fangs have they but their
“ barbs and the edge of their swords. Their fiery
“ steeds rise with them, and round their necks are
“ circles of buds like the basilflower. Ever will I
“ encounter the chests of the chargers, fierce in look,
“ with the spear, till their very saddles and housings
“ cry out. He is blind within whose ken appears my
“ form; he is deaf at whose mouth I raise my shout.
“ The troops shall witness for me in the day of battle,
“ the sword, and the spear, and the pens, and the
“ records. My star shines far raised on high, above
“ Arcturus, above the sun, above the clouds. I am

“ the son of Shedad, through the sublimity of his
“ virtues, in glory, in honour, in liberality, and in
“ courtesy!”

When Antar had finished his verses the men and the chiefs were delighted. For four days they traversed the deserts and the sands, and their anxiety was excessive; and when they reached the great lake, O my brother, said Shiboob, lay in a provision of this water, for there is no more ahead of you. Now was I well assured that you were sufficiently strong to prevent Aswad from coming to this water, I would secrete you in this spot, for when he and his army come here they will be almost dead with thirst. O Ebe-reah, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, if every human being on the face of the earth, long and wide as it is, were to come here, I will not let one of them wet his fingers in this water till the sword has cleaved my heart, and my sight be blinded. If so, said Shiboob, stay here, possess yourself of this spot, whilst I go and obtain some intelligence of this Aswad. And he set out traversing the barren waste; but Antar and his brave associates alighted at the head of the water, and concealed themselves in the mountains. The next day early, behold Shiboob appeared. Glorious morning! cried Antar, come, tell me what is your news. O Ebe-reah! My brother, said Shiboob, I have seen Prince Aswad and his armies, like the rolling sea, and King Zoheir, and his sons, and the Ab-sians all in captivity, for Aswad surprised them in

the morning. They fought for three days, and on the fourth day came the tribe of Fazarah, and with them the tribe of Marah, and the armies attacked them in all directions; so they plundered the dwellings and property, and made the women and families captives. Aswad is now returning on his way to his brother King Numan, overjoyed at what has happened. I heard all this from your friend Prince Malik, for when I separated from you I did not stop in my journey over the wastes till I met the armies, and mingled with them in the dead of the night, when I heard Prince Malik thus complaining:

“ We have drunk of fears after our security; we
“ have been thoughtless of the adversities of fortune;
“ we have tasted of ignominy now that the raiser of
“ the dust of the tumultuous contest has disappeared from us. In his absence we have been
“ destroyed by the oppressor, and the horses of the
“ rebellious with slackened reins have trampled
“ over us. Our families were protected by his long
“ spear, but its point is now broken. O hero of the
“ tribe of Carad, assist us with the edge of thy
“ sword from the rage of the Yemenites. Let not
“ the accursed tribe exult over us. Our wives have
“ been taken captives like harlots. Thou art our
“ refuge at all times when the horses of death trouble us. Thou hast familiarized us to glory and
“ honour, do not break us down, for thou wert the
“ builder. Our wives and our virgins are driven

“ away, and they beckon to thy noble person with
“ their fingers. Tears flow from every brilliant eye
“ over the cheeks, blushing like the judas tree.
“ They cry out in their sorrows, O by Abs, O as-
“ sist us, (sufficient are the pains we now suffer,)
“ against our foes that have driven us into the
“ desert, and let the birds of Yemen mourn over
“ them.”

Shiboob repeated these verses in the language of Prince Malik, and whilst Antar shed tears at the recital, Shiboob continued, O my brother, as soon as I had heard these verses, I advanced towards the Prince, and saluted him. He related to me all that had happened. I consoled his heart, and soon after I drew out my dagger, and I cut in pieces all the water-bags belonging to Prince Aswad, and now they will find no water before them but in this place, and in three days they will reach you.

At hearing the words of Shiboob, Antar's cares and sorrows dissolved. Thou hast done admirably well, O Ebe-reah, said he, and Antar felt assured of the discomfiture of the Prince's army. He then commanded his warriors to conceal themselves among the mountains and the sand-hills, and Shiboob stationed himself as their scout, gazing over the desert to the right and left. But as to Aswad, he marched on, the remainder of the night, till early next day, when he demanded of one of his slaves some water after he had eaten his meal. The slaves stared at each other; they turned pale, and looked to-

wards the ground. What is the matter with ye? said the Prince; and what has happened to you? O Prince, they replied, as soon as morning dawned, we saw all our water-bags and sacks were rent open. On hearing this, the light became darkness in the eyes of the Prince. And who has done this deed? cried he. We know not, most dreaded sire, said they. He immediately ordered his messengers to proceed to the great lake and bring water. They obeyed his directions, and the messengers set out with the water-bags and sacks, forming one hundred brave fellows; and the army continued their march that day and night, and the next day, but as there was no news of the messengers, the Prince and his chiefs marched forward in quest of them, and to procure some water.

As we before mentioned, Antar had stationed Shiboob to look out; so when the messengers advanced, he informed Antar of it. They attempted to fill their bags, and turned towards the water. In an instant sixty were made prisoners, and forty were slain. The messengers and their bags were seized, and to Antar's question about the Prince and his army, they said, They will be with you this day; we quitted them in the most dreadful suspense, and if they wait for us to return with water for them, the whole army must expire of thirst.

O my brother, said Shiboob, give me fifty horsemen of Oorwah's, and I will fill these bags and return to the army, and will supply with drink all the

Absians, and will release them from captivity and bondage; for know that Aswad's troops will not be in a state even to look at one another. Do as you please, son of my mother, said Antar: and immediately Shiboob took away the water-bags and sacks, and selecting fifty horsemen, he departed, passing over roads the accursed devil himself would never have discovered, till mixing with them, he perceived brother knew not his brother, neither a son his father.

The Prince in the mean time had set out in quest of water, and a large portion of his troops had followed him, all most anxiously seized with the desire of drinking. They advanced towards the vicinity of the lake, where they saw their messengers all slain. He was confounded, and whilst they were in this state of horror, Antar assaulted him, and shouted, and terrified him. He smote him with Dhami a blow on the joints of his neck, and he hurled him at his full length on the ground. He dismounted to pinion him, and having bound him fast by the arms, he made towards his army that was dotted about the desert in tens and twenties. Antar and his party appeared against them: all that surrendered he made prisoners, but those that defended themselves he left dead, whilst they cried out to him, O son of Shedad, only give us some water, and take us prisoners.

Antar listened to none of their speeches, neither did he make any answer, even till the remainder of

the army arrived—the whole twenty thousand hustling in crowds towards the water. Antar raved even like a furious camel; he dashed down the warriors; when lo! a troop of horse appeared, amounting to three thousand, all crying out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! and at their head was King Zoheir and his brave sons. Shiboob had effected their escape; for when he departed with the water-bags, filled with water, he continued his journey till he reached the Absian prisoners. Seeing the army each interested in his personal wants, he penetrated through them, and supplied the Absians with water, and ordered Oorwah's people to release them. In an hour all were at liberty, and took their horses as they were by their sides. They carried off armour and accoutrements, and corslets, and in less than an hour they were mounted, and became illustrious horsemen. Join my brother Antar at the great lake, cried Shiboob.

Upon this King Zoheir cried out to his people, Come on, my cousins, to the assistance of the man who has raised us from the dead, and has protected our wives and our daughters. He galloped on, and the Absian warriors followed him till they came up with Antar, and they all in one voice shouted O by Abs! O by Adnan! and they made a general attack on the army.

Antar was rejoiced at seeing the Absians at liberty, and he rushed amongst the enemy. King Zoheir

and his associates performed deeds that would have amazed the bravest of warriors. Thus they continued till the day fled, and the army of the Prince was entirely routed, and dispersed over the desert and waste, Antar and the Absians pursuing them till they drove them out of that country, and then returning to the scattered horses and dispersed plunder, they took possession of the tents, and baggage, and cattle. Aswad was their prisoner, with seven thousand of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam; more than four thousand were slain, the remainder escaped by flight. But Antar turned towards King Zoheir, and he appeared as if plunged in a sea of blood. The King dismounted, and ran towards him, and folding him to his bosom, kissed him between the eyes, thanking him, and extolling him. The same did all King Zoheir's sons; they advanced and saluted Antar, and thanked him for what he had done; whilst the Absians prayed for him, and lauded his deeds. They reposed that night; but the next day they set out for the mountains of Radm, and the valley of Raml.

They continued their march night and day till they reached the mountain, and they found it totally unoccupied. Antar shuddered, and was amazed. Shiboob gazed, and he saw Basharah hung upon the top of the mountain. Shiboob wept bitterly; Antar grieved for Ibla, and his tears streamed in torrents.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN Antar departed in quest of Prince Aswad, he deputed his uncle Malik and his son, and a party of Oorwah's people, to take charge of the prisoners, and to protect the place. But as soon as he was gone, Amroo entered unto the prisoners, and began to abuse them, demanding restitution of the property they had taken from Ibla. Alas, O Amroo! said Rebia, art thou not ashamed of this discourse, and art not thou, as well as thy father, utterly disgraced by following this cursed and perfidious slave? Thinkest thou, O Amroo, that Antar can resist the Arab and the Persian, when King Numan shall send for him? What will ye do then? And moreover, O Amroo, how canst thou reconcile it to thy heart to marry thy sister to one, who used to tend her camels and her flocks? Rejoice then in the certainty that Antar will never return; for he is gone to fight with twenty thousand horsemen. My opinion is, thou shouldst persuade thy father to avail himself of this opportunity before he repents.

These words entered deep into Amroo's ears; Rebia's wily ways had their effect; and he felt

ashamed on the subject of his sister. But how can we manage to escape ? said he. My advice is, said Rebia, that you refer your business to this noble hero Mooferridj, he will take you with him to King Numan, and will secure his protection for you, and when we arrive at Hirah, and shall see Prince Aswad on his return, with King Zoheir, a prisoner, and all the tribe of Abs, we will mediate for King Zoheir, and will marry his daughter to King Numan, and marry Ibla to this valiant Chief Amarah ; then we will return all together home to our families and friends. God bless you for this contrivance ! said Amarah.

As soon as Amroo heard this, he was convinced. So he quitted the prisoners, and repaired to his father Malik, and related all that Rebia had mentioned. All this is perfectly correct, said his father, but I fear the good fortune of Antar : for we have never attempted to oppose him, but we have fallen into most grievous calamities ; but have patience with me till I have decided on the plan. They waited till night came on with its obscurity. Arise, said Malik to his son, seek the prisoners, that is, release them.

Amroo instantly arose, and went to the prisoners, and unbound them, and informed them of what his father had planned. He delivered to them their arms and accoutrements, and their horses ; and as we have said, they were the tyrants of war-

riors. So when they gained possession of their arms and armour, each sprang forth a lion. They assaulted the mountain; they seized the men, and bound them fast by the shoulders. They made the women and families captive, and plundered the stores and cattle; and by morning they were masters of every thing. But the first thing Mooferridj and Rebia did was to hang Basharah on the mountain top. They set their wives at liberty, and bound the women of the family of Carad, and Ibla was treated in the most ignominious manner, in contempt towards Antar. They drove away the cattle, and issued from the mountains, seeking the land of King Numan.

Amarah was in ecstasy, and kept trotting round the howdah in which was Ibla, brandishing his spear in his left hand. They continued their journey that day and night, but on the next day, soon after sunrise, there arose a dust: they halted, it cleared away, and there appeared five thousand horse, preceded by a knight, like a huge fragment of a mountain, or one of the remnants of the tribe of Aad. His feet drew deep lines over the land, such was the length of his body.

As soon as Mooferridj saw him, Fly, my cousins, fly, he cried; this is the Chief Maadi Kereb, and he wheeled round and fled, Sinan and Rebia following him. How can we fly, exclaimed Amarah, and abandon Ibla, and not fight a little at any rate,

that she may view the intrepid conduct of the fierce Amarah? O thou defiled mustachioed fool! follow me, and give us none of your bark-husks*, cried Rebia. Upon this, he threw away his spear and fled.

When Zalim saw what the family of Zeead had done, May God disgrace you among men, he cried; you that cannot protect your women, or repulse an enemy or foe. Then he also took to flight, and escaped.

This warrior that met them was a sturdy hero, and an undaunted lion, one of the thousand tyrants; his stature equalled the tallest trees, when he stood still and when he moved; in his hand he bore a thundering spear, and he was the dread of all warriors.

When Antar had taken Jayda captive, and had slain her cousin Khalid, Jayda obtained her liberty and fled, and in grief at what had befallen her, she clothed herself in black, and wept and mourned incessantly. And Maadi Kereb, when drinking, found his pleasures so disturbed by her lamentations and complaints, that he resolved on an expedition, when lo! a messenger came towards him, and saluting him, informed him of all Antar had done, and that he was gone down to the mountains of Radm, and that King Numan had sent twenty thousand horsemen against him.

* i. e. Nonsense.

When Maadi Kereb heard this, he was delighted; he sent for Jayda. Be comforted in the death of Antar, as a compensation for your cousin, said he. Let us, cried Jayda, undertake the destruction of this perfidious slave, and let us avenge ourselves.

On hearing this, Maadi Kereb ordered the tribes of Morad and Zebeed to prepare their warlike weapons. He selected five thousand horsemen, and resolved on departing. Jayda too was overjoyed at this expedition to engage Antar, for she was filled with the notion that she should kill him, and take vengeance for the loss of her cousin Khalid; and when they were at some distance from the tribe of Zebeed, Jayda thus expressed herself:

“My life is wasting, but my grief passes not
“away. My courage is diminished, and my soul is
“exhausted. My tears flow abundantly, and my
“eyelids are ulcered; any sleep, now Khalid is
“gone, is my oppression. Alas! alas! O my re-
“grets for him who defended us with his Indian
“blade! But a slave of the tribe of Carad has af-
“flicted us; whose arm is fate and approaching
“death. Were there not such vicissitudes of
“fortune, honours would not be granted to the
“base-born slaves. O sons of my uncle! rouse the
“dust of battle against the country of Abs and its
“regions. Drive away all their virgins with the
“point of the spear, to their infamy and disgrace.

“ My fury can never be appeased without the
“ piercing spear that raises the dust of conten-
“ tion, or the blow from the sharp-edged scimitar,
“ that makes the bravest gnaw their fingers with
“ rage.”

When Jayda had finished her verses, pride burst like a hurricane through the heads of her warriors, and they continued their course till they met Moofer-ridj, and all his people fled.

When Maadi Kereb marked Mooferridj and his flight, See these wretches, daughter of my uncle ! he cried to Jayda, when the wolf snuffs the smell of a lion, he flies and runs in terror away. But as soon as he saw Malik, Ibla's father, he recognised him, and also his son Amroo, and the whole body of Caradians. Know, said he to Jayda, these are our enemies, and Malik, son of Carad, who sent Antar to our country to slay your cousin. Thou old wretch, thou perfidious dog, bellowed he at Malik, we have heard the tribe of Shibani were your captives ; how is it we see you with them in captivity and bondage ? And truly they have carried off your property and families, and this is indeed a most curious affair. O warrior, said Malik, all you have heard is true, and we are ourselves the cause of this calamity ; for we have abandoned truth, and have followed fraud and deceit ; and we have been betrayed by those in whom we confided. He then informed him all about Antar, and how he had delivered the pri-

soners over to them, and was gone to meet Prince Aswad, and we, he continued, have set them at liberty, and this fatality is now come upon us. Maadi Kereb was amazed at this recital. You have indeed rewarded Antar most infamously, said he; but you know that it is Antar who has made you the common talk among the Arabs; and truly you have acted in the basest manner. And he fell upon him and his son Amroo with a whip he had in his hand, till he made their blood stream upon the ground from the violence of his blows.

After this, Maadi Kereb and Jayda, with their troops, returned, seeking their own country, taking with them the property of the family of Carad, their women and children. Ibla wept night and day for her cousin, the magnanimous conqueror Antar. But Jayda had ever in her mind the words of Malik to Antar, viz.—I will not marry my daughter to you, till you bring me Jayda to hold the bridle of her camel on the marriage night. So she went aside to him and his son, and beat them violently, till their blood trickled upon the earth, and they were nearly lifeless from excessive torture. Thus they indeed repented of their behaviour to Antar. But as to the Shibanians that fled from Antar when he took their Chief Mooferridj prisoner, they continued their hasty course till they came to King Numan, and related what Antar had done to them. On hearing this, the light became dark-

ness in the eyes of Numan, and he was amazed at Antar's good fortune. Well, said he to his attendants, entertain them till Prince Aswad arrives with his prisoner King Zoheir, and the whole Abisian tribe; and then I will send all my armies and troops against Antar, and will order them to bring him to my presence, that I may inflict on him the severest torments, and feed the dogs on his flesh.

He remained quiet for seven days, when the Chief Mooferridj arrived, together with Rebia, and the warriors, and there was not one but wept and shed torrents of tears in detailing his condition and his adventures, and when King Numan heard the occasion of this disaster, wrath was kindled in his countenance—he made them repeat their story. And Antar has proceeded against your brother the Prince, they added, with one hundred and fifty horsemen. Verily, exclaimed King Numan, this circumstance deserves to be recorded and inscribed, particularly if Antar should rout my brother and his army; then indeed there will be no resource but for me to deliver up the kingdom of the Arabs to Antar, and put myself to no further trouble about it.

King Numan waited patiently in expectation of his brother's arrival, his heart all the time enduring unknown tortures. In a few days the army that fled from the great lake arrived, all cut to pieces—

wandering over the wilds—not one daring to look behind him—each ignorant of the fate of his companions—till they presented themselves before King Numan, all exclaiming, What terrors! what dreadful events! King Numan, on seeing them in this condition, felt his heart on fire, and his distraction was insupportable. What! has Antar vanquished you? he cried. Yes, they exclaimed; he has rooted out every vestige of us, and has not left of us even one to fight, nor a banner to wave.

Yet he would not have succeeded in his attempts but by thirst and drought, they added; for he met us at the great lake. He took your brother prisoner, with seven thousand of his horsemen, of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam, and four thousand were slain in the dust; the remainder fled over the wilds, and this is our fate. As to those four thousand, exclaimed Numan, who have been killed, how shall we be revenged on that sturdy slave, and how shall we take his blood, in compensation for the chieftains of Lakhm and Juzam? For truly, if this news reaches Chosroe, we shall be no longer considered or respected by him. I am quite distracted, and know not how to extricate myself from these difficulties.

O King, said Rebia, write to the Arabs who are under your dominion, and I will also write to the tribe of Fazarah. We will all go against Antar, and tear up every vestige of him. Thou Sheikh of

iniquity, exclaimed Numan, turning upon him; by the faith of an Arab, thou hast indeed opened an unfortunate door with these Arab dogs, and thou for this disturbance deservest nought but to have your chin shaved, and the cruelest tortures, thou ordure of Arabs and men! But Numan ordered letters to be written to all the Arab tribes, both near and distant, requiring them to repair to him with all speed, and the Vizier Amroo, son of Nefilah, wrote accordingly to the Arabs, and amongst others to Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, ordering him to come with his troops, and he also was directed to release the Shibanian women, and to restore to Mooferridj the property he had captured, and to take care of Ibla, and the family of Carad he had with him, until the differences with Antar should be arranged; and we, it was said in conclusion, will give you half the spoil, when Antar is dead.

As soon as this letter reached Maadi Kereb, he was greatly astonished. What extraordinary times, what wonderful events are these! he exclaimed. This slave must be endued with the most admirable qualities; and the proof is, that he has taken Prince Aswad prisoner; and truly by this his name will be recorded for ages: in fact, at first it was a disgrace and a dishonour to fight with Antar, but now it will be a glory and a boast, now that he has vanquished kings, and overcome the bravest. But I am anxious

to outstrip the armies of King Numan, and succeed in putting this black wittol to death. He inquired intelligence of the messengers about Antar, and they informed him that he was gone down to the mountains of Radm.

On hearing this, he sent for Jayda, and related to her Antar's adventures; and now, he added, Numan has ordered me to attack him, and to restore Mooferridj's property. And what have you resolved on doing? asked Jayda. As to his orders, replied Maadi Kereb, about the restitution of Mooferridj's property, I must obey; but as to his directions about my repairing to him, that I will not do; but I will collect my troops, and will go against Antar myself. I will not trouble King Numan, but will accomplish his wishes, and I will not proceed to King Numan, but with all the tribe of Abs driven ahead of me, with ropes round their necks, and Antar's head raised high on one of my longest spears. And who, said Jayda, must go with Mooferridj's property? You; said Maadi Kereb. But then, said she, I must have with me the family of Carad, and their property, that I may not be slack in torturing that Malik, and his son Amroo.

Jayda remained that night, but the next day she mounted her steed, and taking away with her Mooferridj's property, the family of Carad, and their goods, she set out on her way to Irak. Maadi

Kereb, too, mounted with five thousand stout Zebeedians, and went to engage Antar. He marched at the head of his warriors like a strong tower, thus reciting :

“ The lions of the desert are my delight and
“ my companions; they see in me their fellow and
“ ally. Behold, the dwellings of the family of Ca-
“ rad are near their final doom. In the combat I
“ have overwhelmed their horsemen on account of
“ their slave, surnamed the accursed. I will de-
“ stroy their chiefs with the thrust of the spear
“ through their bowels and their waists. You shall
“ be satiated with their blood, after ye have eaten
“ your fill, ye wild beasts—so thank me—I am
“ Maadi Kereb, the chief of the Zebeedians, and
“ every Arab horseman is my inferior. Every
“ warrior humbles himself before me, struck with
“ fear when I brandish my sword in my hand.
“ Mine is the universe, and every slave therein in
“ the castles and the fortresses. My force is the
“ force of the lion; they fear my power, and ap-
“ proach me not. I heed them not. I care not
“ for them when they oppose me; and were it not
“ a heinous sin, I would say to the whole earth,
“ my right hand and my left hand should sub-
“ vert it.”

These verses proceeded from that extreme ignorance of the Arabs, for when any one of them mounted a horse, he used to say, the earth tottered

in affright at him, and that all the bravest warriors were within his grasp, and thus Maadi Kereb sought the mountains. But as to Antar, when he returned to the mountains, and saw that whole country destroyed, and Basharah hung up and the birds feeding on him, he was as no one had ever been before him, such was his distress at the loss of Ibla; yet he concealed his grief, and in appearance was patient and resigned. O my brother, said Shiboob, by the faith of an Arab, no one but your uncle Malik and his son Amroo have released the prisoners; indeed I was never comfortable at leaving them behind us in the mountains, for treachery is their nature, and iniquity can never be extracted from their hearts; but their perfidy will certainly fall upon them.

Antar and the Absians alighted in the mountains; they pitched their tents, and raised their standards, and crammed the caverns full with the prisoners; and whilst Shiboob and a party of slaves were stationed guard over them, Antar remained quiet; but in his heart was the flame of anxiety to learn some intelligence, and though in company with King Zoheir he evinced the most perfect courage and forbearance, yet when alone he thought only of Ibla; his grief then became extreme; he wept immoderately, and thus spoke:

“ Who is it by whom the lands of the valley of

“ Raml are laid waste? Where are his traces, O
“ northern blasts? Here I stand, and my tears
“ flood my eyes at the inutility of my demand.
“ Should I ask of the damsels of Carad and of her
“ companions for that beauty, how deceitful would
“ be the reply! how irrelevant to my question! At
“ the voice of the raven I am melancholy, and my
“ tears flow like pearls. O raven, wherefore dost
“ thou call all the day long on my right hand and
“ on my left? thou communicatest to me every
“ species of grief, and tellest of separation after en-
“ joyment, as if I had sacrificed thy young with the
“ edge of my sword, and had laid snares for thee.
“ By the virtue of thy parent, rather soothe the
“ wounds of my heart, and quench the flame of my
“ soul with thy song. Speak to me of my Ibla, tell
“ me where she is, and what the hands of darkness
“ are doing to her. My heart roams distracted over
“ the earth, marking the traces of her camel’s foot-
“ steps. My body is cast among the mountains of
“ Radm, and my imagination is haunted with
“ phantoms. In the valley the bird flits on the
“ branches, and its complaints are in the extreme of
“ bitterness. I say to it whilst it continues its sor-
“ rows, complain no more; is thy condition like
“ mine? As for me, my tears flow, and thou
“ mournest also, but without tears; and that is the
“ just explanation of my state. May God execrate
“ separation and respect it not; how oft has my

“heart been shivered with its arrows! I have engaged every hardy obstinate warrior, but absence kills me without a contest. I am truly called the Antar of horsemen, and the animated leader in every affair of importance and peril!”

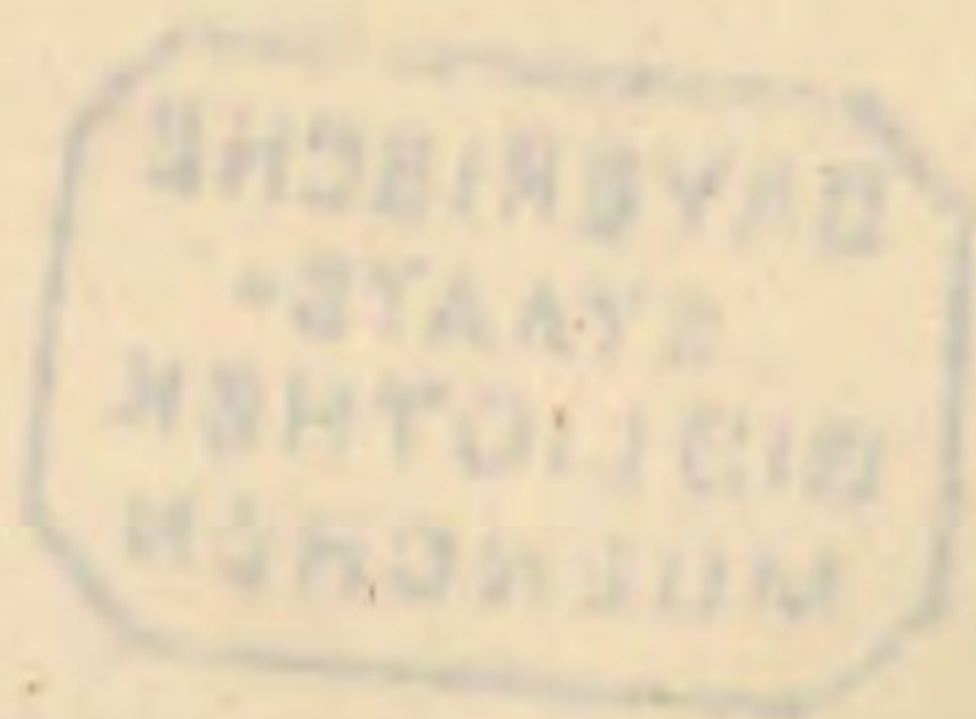
Antar indulged in incessant grief and lamentation morning and evening till the arrival of his brother Jareer; his coming was indeed like a festival, for he informed him of all that had happened; and Maadi Kereb, he added, is marching against you with five thousand warriors, all immersed in steel and resplendent armour. Jareer had been taken prisoner with Ibla, and was unable to effect his escape till Jayda set out to go to King Numan. Jayda indeed did not know him, or that he was Antar's brother, or she would have treated him ill; for among the Arabs it was not generally understood that Antar had any brother but Shiboob.

Antar conducted him to King Zoheir, to whom he related all he had heard. O Aboolfawaris, said he, as to this knight that is coming against us, all the warriors are unanimous in their opinion that he is a tyrant fire even cannot overcome; and now what are your intentions, and what is your advice? None but to meet this Maadi Kereb, exclaimed Antar, and all his host. Afterwards I will engage King Numan, and will extirpate all the Arabs he has assembled round him. I will raise thee to his station: then will I go to Moodayin, and will put Chosroes Nushirvan to death. I will exterminate all the armies of Persia,



and will not leave one of them to wag a leg; then will I become lord of the balcony, and will rule over the Persian and the Arab, for I know when death is protracted, the sharpest scimitar cannot avail, and man can effect what he pleases and desires, were he even the most contemptible of slaves. When King Zoheir heard Antar's discourse he was amazed at his intrepidity, and the little account he made of the Arabs. Do as you please, he said, for we will be guided by your actions. If you engage, we will engage; if you fight, we will fight; if you die, we will die. Yours is our property, and yours is all we possess. Console your heart and brighten up your eye, said Antar, for by the faith of an Arab, I must absolutely put you in possession of King Numan's station, had he even with him men and demons, and the fiends that rebelled against our Lord Soliman. I will strike off the head of my uncle Malik and his son Amroo. Thus saying, he started out of King Zoheir's presence, and every night he kept the watch, but on the third night the Absians searched for Antar, but could not find him. King Zoheir was greatly agitated, and he said, Antar is surely gone to encounter Maadi Kereb and the tribe of Zebeed; never will he let them reach this desert.

As to Maadi Kereb, he marched on till he came into the vicinity of the mountains, when he halted at one of the lakes, where assembling his people about him, O my cousins, said he, I am sure when



Antar hears of our expedition, he will either not dare to appear without the mountains, or he will intercept our road, or he will run away when he hears of us, and will not venture to establish himself in this country. But I am desirous of executing a plan, which is this: I will take with me ten warriors, and will set out and surprise the defile at day-break before they have any information of us. I will ply the sword well among them, and will allay my heart with them till you come up and facilitate the business for us, and make the affair easy. We shall gain a great reputation by this enterprise, for a well-contrived plan is more creditable than engaging in a battle. Do as you please, they said. He reposed till the greater part of the night was passed; he then mounted his horse, and took with him ten horsemen, whose firmness in the most imminent perils he well knew, and he set out for the mountains. He travelled on till day-break, when he heard something ahead of him, and saw a man on foot skulking before them. Go, said Maadi Kereb to one of his horsemen, and bring me news of this fellow on foot. But he observed them as soon as they observed him. Hey! young man, cried the Zebeedian, who art thou? whence comest thou? and whither art thou going? I am a Zebeedian, said the man on foot, and my master Maadi Kereb has sent me to obtain intelligence of Antar. Thou liest, said the Zebeedian, thou ordure-born wretch, we are the tribe of Zebeed marching to en-

gage Antar, and no human being has been sent before us. And he fixed his spear in his hand, and was about to drive him into Maadi Kereb's presence, but the man on foot had already drawn out an arrow from his quiver, and fixed it on the handle of his bow, and shot the Zebeedian with it on the chest, and the arrow pierced him quivering through his back; he gave a scream, and fell dead. My cousins, cried out Maadi Kereb, this fellow on foot has slain our cousin; come on, on to him: and the nine crowded after him, and shouted out, and sought him in all directions. But when the man on foot saw the troop in quest of him, he fled out of their sight in less than the twinkling of an eye, and they could perceive no trace of him. The Zebeedians were amazed at his agility: This can be no human being, said they. He had not disappeared long when he returned, and with him a knight on a black steed. Ye ignoble dastards, he cried, I am Antar, son of Shedad, the vanquisher of heroes.

Now Antar, after what had occurred in the presence of King Zoheir, kept watch; but on the third night, said Antar to Shiboob, Let us, son of my mother, go to some distance from the mountains; perhaps we may come upon Maadi Kereb, and I will show him what will surprise him, for the king has been crying up his intrepidity. Do what you please, said Shiboob. So they marched on till they met Maadi Kereb and his party. Shiboob slew the horseman, and returned to acquaint his brother with

what had passed. Antar was delighted, and congratulated himself, and assaulted the Zebeed heroes; he slew five of them, and Shiboob three with his arrows, and only one escaped, no more, who returned to Maadi Kereb, and told him what Antar had done to his comrades. When Maadi Kereb heard this, the light became dark in his eyes, and without saying a word he rushed upon Antar like a furious lion. Antar also received him as the parched up ground the first of the rain, and descended upon him like the descent of fate and destiny. They engaged till the very tears gushed from their eyes, and darkness involved them in shades of night. Thrusts fell at random, and the blood flowed from their bodies upon the surface of the earth. It was a moment the horrors of which turned youth to age. They continued the fight and the conflict till the morning rose upon them, and in their hands only remained the stumps of their spears. They threw them away, and unsheathed their scimitars, more ready instruments of death; they smote each other with their swords against their shields till the whole country was illumined by their flashes. The sweat streamed from their bodies, and both wished they had never been born; they rushed at each other with the fury of lions, so that their feet ground down even the stones and the rocks. Shiboob was also occupied with the horseman who had escaped out of the ten; neither did he discontinue his wiles and tricks till he had slain

his horse, and he became a man on foot like himself. It was then he attacked him with his arrows, but could make no impression on him on account of the steel and coat of mail he had on him. The conflict continued between Antar and Maadi Kereb like a sparkling fire till Maadi Kereb was fatigued and exhausted, and disgrace followed glory; for he observed in Antar something on which he had not calculated. So he was overwhelmed with shame and repentance, for he had not suspected that he should meet with such a reception from Antar, or be subject to such difficulties with him. They flung away their swords out of their hands, and slung their shields behind their shoulders; the two approached with their horses, and wrestled on their backs with their whole power and force till their horses sunk beneath them, and both fell to the ground. During this they both bellowed like the roar of lions, and their feet pounded the stones and the rocks whilst they wrestled and struggled, and the sweat poured down from their bodies like the froth of caldrons, and their feet stamped up furrows like graves. But Maadi Kereb was worn out and exhausted, and observing how Antar engaged, the tears started from his eyes from excess of rage. Antar roared at him in a voice like thunder in the clouds, and extending at him his arm like the neck of a black camel, he grasped him by the rings of his corslet and his coat of mail, and cried out, O by Abs, I will not be controlled,

I am the lover of Ibla; I will not be restrained! and he tore him up from the ground, took him prisoner, and dashing him again on the earth, bound fast his shoulders. But when the Zebeedian saw Maadi Kereb in Antar's power he attempted to escape by flight from the presence of Shiboob, but he overtook him like a blast of wind, and as he raised his hand with his dagger, the other begged for quarter, and delivered himself up to Shiboob, who pinioned his arms, and went with him to his brother Antar. As soon as he came before him, Hey! we are on a par in intrepidity this night, said he, for you have taken prisoner a knight and I also. By the truth of Him who distinguishes between morning and evening, no woman will ever bring forth another such man as Maadi Kereb, unless indeed it should be the express will and pleasure of the God of old, said Antar. By the faith of noble Arabs, who preserve inviolate their faith and protection, exclaimed Maadi Kereb, all skill fails when you are present in the field, and even the boldest is but a coward before you. At that period knights did justice to each other in their conversation, and no one amongst them forfeited the consideration of a hero.

Antar bound Maadi Kereb on the back of a horse as he said to Shiboob, Make fast also your prisoner, and return with me to the tribe that we may see how this business will terminate, for it is my wish to ransom Maadi Kereb for Ibla and all

our prisoners in the power of King Numan, otherwise I will strike off the head of his brother Prince Aswad, and all the prisoners of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam ; and I will release my own people with the edge of my sword, were they even on the back of the clouds. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, there is no occasion for these threats, for Ibla shall be at liberty, and so shall all the women, men and children with her, and their property, and there shall not be lost of all that belonged to you the value of a halter ; and if you will but confide in my word, and release me from bondage, I will restore your family to you, and will intercede for a termination of this difference. Then will I take you as my master and friend for ever, and perhaps I shall be able to mediate between you and King Numan before he marches the Arabs against you, and a host numerous as the sands attack you ; and should you then wish for a conference it will not be granted, for intrepidity avails not with numbers, and good counsel is preferable to exposure to dangers. But now you are apprised of the whole business, so consider your own safety. O Maadi, I am aware of all you have said, replied Antar ; but know I have not undertaken this enterprise or opposed King Numan but in order to erase from me the name of servitude, and to attain high honours ; and my mind assures me I shall subvert governments, and my name become celebrated among the mountains and the plains. It is only on this account I expose my

person to perils, and in this crisis I must seat myself in the very station of Chosroe Nushirvan, the lord of the tiara and the balcony. Maadi Kereb was amazed at the strength of his heart, and he was convinced he must be a most potent warrior and of no soft mould.

Antar had not advanced far when the Zebeedian army approached, that filled the whole surrounding region. Maadi Kereb told Antar what he had done, and that his tribe was advancing on no other account; but, said he to Shiboob, go you away with the prisoners, and let me attack this army alone, and let me destroy them with the force of my arm and my elbow. Shiboob proceeded with the prisoners; but Maadi Kereb shuddered, and was stupefied at Antar's expressions, seeing a single knight prepare to engage five thousand horsemen. Thou brave slave, he exclaimed, fire even cannot harm thee. The Zebeedians soon reached the field of battle; they saw the carcasses of their companions stretched on the ground, and knowing they were those who had accompanied Maadi Kereb, they cried out, Misery and ruin! They looked round to the right and left, searching out some one of whom to inquire who had done this deed: they saw no one but Antar stalking towards them, when one cried out, Come on, here is a knight, I will ask him; but if it is he that has acted thus to our comrades, cut him in pieces with your swords; and they crowded on till they came near to him. Hey, foul-born! they

cried, who has executed this deed on our companions? Where is our chief Maadi Kereb?

Antar's answer was that of a ferocious lion; he roared, and he bellowed, and shouted: Ye sons of harlots, as to your chief, I have taken him prisoner; and as to you, ye shall drink of disgrace and misery; and as to myself, I am Antar, son of Shedad, the destroyer of heroes. He had no sooner spoken than he rushed upon them; he pierced the first and hurled him over; the second he disgraced; a third he annihilated his existence; and so likewise with a fourth and a fifth; and in less than an hour the whole five thousand halted, and the foremost fell back upon the hindmost, shouting at him from a distance, not one of them venturing to come near the spot where he stood, for if they approached, he slew them instantly, and he killed above two hundred. The remainder were seized with panic and alarm, and when they saw the calamity that was falling upon them, they divided into five parties, and surrounding Antar on all sides, the men made at him with their spears and their swords, but Antar uncovered his head and assaulted them, raving like a furious camel; his eyeballs flashed fire, and the foam poured from the corners of his lips. He shouted forth: O by Abs! O by Adnan! By thine eyes, O Ibla, this day will I slay these horsemen. The Zebecdians were in the utmost consternation as they said to each other: Fly not, or ye will remain a foul disgrace among the Arabs; they hemmed him in,

and drew blood from his body ; his horse Abjer was giving way, and there was not space for him to advance or retreat. Antar wanted to dismount, when lo ! a dust arose, and discovered King Zoheir and five hundred Absian horsemen, preceded by Shiboob like a wolf, and when they came up they attacked and shouted, men met men, and heroes encountered heroes. Antar recovered his power. The cause of King Zoheir's arrival was this : being exceedingly distressed at the disappearance of Antar, he sent for Jareer and asked him, how long ago it was that he had quitted Maadi Kereb ? My lord, he replied, I only left him behind two nights. Then, said King Zoheir, Antar is only gone with a view to finish their business, but it will be as well for us to join him and assist him : And I will go, said Oorwah, with my men to his aid ; and I, said Shedad, I will accompany you, and thus said Zakhmetuljewad, and all the Carad horsemen. And I will also go myself, said King Zoheir, I will not be backward in aiding our protector Antar, the overwhelming knight. So he took in all five hundred horse as we mentioned, and followed the traces of Antar. About midday they met Shiboob, and with him Maadi Kereb and his associates, and their hearts were at ease, particularly when they saw his prisoners. They saluted him, and asked him what had happened to them. He related all that had passed about Maadi Kereb : Overtake my brother, he added, for he is in trouble ; the Zebeedian troops

have attacked him alone, and he is now in the midst of an army of five thousand men.

Shiboob gave over Maadi Kereb and his companion to ten horsemen, and directed them to go with them to the mountains, and returned at the head of the horse like an antelope, till they came up with Antar, and attacked the tribe of Zebeed. By their assault, the horsemen were drawn off from Antar, and he rushed among the warriors. The Zebeedians, perceiving the destructive force of Antar and the Absians, turned away in flight, and departed in haste and confusion. In an hour a thousand of them were slain, and they said to each other, We, when Antar was even alone, could make no impression upon him; how can we succeed now that he has five hundred horsemen with him? and they wheeled about their horses' heads, and sought their own country. But Antar and the Absians pursued them till they drove them out of that land, and then returned to the scattered horses and dispersed armour, and having collected all the spoil, they set out for the mountains; Antar going ahead, as if he had been immersed in a sea of blood. When they reached the mountains, they assembled the women and families, and all were in high spirits at this event. They reposed that night, rejoicing in victory and triumph, and extolling Antar till day-break; when Antar mounted and repaired to King Zoheir. As soon as he appeared, the king sprang on his legs and met him, and seating him in the

most honourable place, O Aboolfawaris, said he, you expose your person to great hazards, and I fear some dreadful accident will happen to you, and you will leave us to regret you for ages. O noble king, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, verily all these events do not hasten death, and do not avert misfortune. King Zoheir was amazed at his words, (and it was on this account that all the Arab horsemen were so brave). Antar having ended his discourse, directed Shiboob to produce Maadi Kereb, and when he was in his presence: O Maadi Kereb, said he, write to Jayda and Numan, and demand your ransom of them. He agreed to the propriety of the proposal, and immediately wrote to Jayda, and thus expressed himself:

You, whom I acknowledge as the daughter of my uncle, know that fortune is treacherous, and the wise are not always secure from adversity, and he who says no one can slay me, errs in his speech. I indeed have acted like a fool, and was not aware of the vicissitudes of fortune. I have fallen into the power of the knight of Abs and Adnan. Then he explained in his letter all that happened with Antar: he recommended her to restore all the Carad women, adding, Treat Ibla kindly, and her father also, and make your excuses to them; do not detain any particle of their property; but be quick, be quick! before death arrives.

He despatched it by a Zebeedian horseman, and ordered him to return with all speed. But as to

Jayda, after she had separated from Maadi Kereb, she eagerly pursued her course, taking with her the women of Carad, and their property and children, till she arrived in the lank of Irak, where she saw the numerous assembled tribes. She presented herself to King Numan, and saluting him, delivered to him the women of the tribe of Carad and their property. Numan was much pleased, and to his inquiries about Maadi Kereb, she told him he was gone to meet Antar: By the faith of a noble Arab, said he, if Maadi Kereb effects this, and vanquishes the tribe of Abs and Antar, I will make him ruler over all the Arab tribes of the desert. Rebia looked at Ibla, and her father, and her brother, and observing how tortures had altered their condition, his heart grieved for them.

CHAPTER XX.

KING NUMAN stationed a guard over the family of Carad, vowing he would not hang Ibla, but by the side of Antar, and that he would not leave a single Absian alive. In the meantime he assembled his clans, amounting to forty thousand men. The last party that arrived were the tribe of Kendeh, commanded by Hidjar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan, a man of severe morose disposition and harsh manners, but whose name was celebrated for bravery, and general excellence in arms; for he was also one of the thousand tyrants in that age of ignorance. King Numan went out to meet him, and treated him and his companions with every mark of honour and respect. O king of the world, said Hidjar, why have you assembled all these armies? Who is he among the Arab kings that has rebelled against you? O chief Hidjar, replied Numan, no king has rebelled against us. But it is that slave Antar, that black robber, whom fortune has favoured to our prejudice, he has destroyed our armies, and defeated our horsemen; he has acquired glory—ay, and such glory! At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Hidjar. O king, he cried, who is this Antar, this camel-driver, that you should on his account assemble these armies

and warriors? For I myself, by the life of your head, am able to take that Antar prisoner with ten men on foot. I will bring him to you in a state of infamy, and also all the tribe of Abs bound with cords, and among the first shall be King Zoheir and his sons. We well know, said Numan, that you are able to do what you say, but all I desire of you is, to bring me Antar prisoner, that I may inflict on him the cruelest torments. Hidjar returned to his party, biting his hands in regret that he had not previously attacked Antar.

On that day arrived Maadi Kereb's requisition to Jayda, demanding of her his ransom in cattle; and as soon as she had read it, she instantly repaired to King Numan, and presented him the letter. He took it and read it; rage and indignation possessed him; he summoned his ministers, and consulted them about what he should do. But as they all remained silent, Numan addressed them (and their silence increased his passion), I must absolutely march against him with the whole force of Arabs now assembled, or never shall I succeed. O dreaded king, said his vizier Amroo, son of Nefeela, I cannot approve of such a plan; for if you march against Antar with all these Arabs and Persians, perceiving himself thus reduced to a state of utter desolation, he will say to you, If thou dost not leave me quiet, I will cut off thy brother's head, and the heads of all those I have in my power: but, O noble king, ponder well this very important affair;

and purchase the blood of seven thousand of your countrymen with the blood of that worthless Antar. But what is your advice ? said Numan. My advice, replied he, is that you should immediately release your prisoners ; but if you vanquish him, treat him as you please. Send him an answer to this effect. I will exchange your uncle for Maadi Kereb ; but if you wish to ransom Ibla and the other women, release my brother and his companions, or I will send you her head, and will slay all the families with her. And know, O King, were the whole universe in his power, and demanded for Ibla, he would set the whole at liberty. Numan, feeling convinced of the propriety of his vizier's advice, ordered him to write the letter to that effect. - He gave it to one of his attendants, whom he honoured with standards and ensigns, appointing also an escort of twenty horsemen, and ordering him to proceed by the shortest road. When the Satrap approached the mountains, he attempted to enter the valley, but the slaves checked him : Stay where you are, son of a coward, said they, till we obtain permission for your further progress from Antar, son of Shedad. The Satrap stopped, and his heart trembled within him as he said to himself, Verily Antar is like Chosroe Nushirvan himself. On the representation of the slaves, Antar granted the Satrap permission to enter within the mountains ; and desiring King Zoheir to sit down, he stood over his head, grasping his sword Dhami unsheathed in his hand, and deaths were

glaring from his eyes. As the Satrap entered, and beheld Antar, he shuddered and was stupefied, and in the excess of his terror, he kissed the ground in the presence of King Zoheir and Antar. He then presented the letter to King Zoheir, who took it and read it, and explained to Antar the threats and conditions it contained. But Antar's eyes glowed fiercely like burning coals; he roared at the Satrap in a voice that made the barren wastes shake to their very foundation. The Satrap trembled and shrunk back. Heh! thou bastard, exclaimed Antar, by the faith of noble Arabs, wert thou not in the presence of this awe-inspiring king, I would cut off thy head, and I would leave thee lifeless, my first victim; away! disgrace and infamy be on the mother of Numan and the mother of Chosroe Nushirvan. Dares Numan threaten one like me with his wild Arabs? Would he frighten me with his bombastical nonsense? By the faith of an Arab, were it not for the respect due to King Zoheir, I would make thee drink of the cup of death; as to his demand of his brother Prince Aswad, and the prisoners, and Maadi Kereb, I will release them all, that it may not be said that I fear them. But I will not release the captives, unless, together with my cousin Ibla, be delivered up Chosroe's tiara, and all the property that was taken from her by Rebia and Mooferridj; and let not the value of a halter be missing of Ibla's property. On hearing Antar's determination, the Satrap retired,

and mounting instantly, returned to King Numan, before whom he repeated what Antar had said. King Zoheir then, said Numan, made no reply. No, said the Satrap, by the life of your head, my lord, he dared not open his mouth in the presence of Antar, but seemed bridled and bitted. But what was it that produced in thee such fear and horror? asked Numan. O King, said he, you have never seen Antar, and have never seen his eyes like balls of burning coal. Take your own measures upon this point, said Numan to his vizier, send away the women of the Carad family with their property and their husbands. He also ordered Ibla's property to be taken out of the magazines, so that not an article was left to the value of a halter; he delivered up the whole.

Take your property, said the vizier Amroo to Malik, Ibla's father, and his son Amroo: Away to Antar your cousin. When Malik heard the vizier say your cousin, his rage became exceedingly great; and he turned towards Rebia, saying, O my cousin, let me remain a thousand years in prison, but let me not return again to behold the face of that bastard Antar: but, by the faith of an Arab, I must contrive his death; I must destroy him by my artifices and stratagems. Thus the chiefs of the Carad family marched away with their wives and children, and all their property, and the slaves proceeded ahead, driving on the cattle and the camels, till they reached the mountains, when they raised loud

shouts, and prayed for Antar the unconquerable knight. Antar and the chiefs of the tribe of Abs being apprised of their arrival, they went out to meet them, accompanied by King Zoheir and his sons, who were delighted at their safety and the restitution of their goods. Antar embraced his uncle Malik and his son Amroo, saying, No evil or calamity, my uncle, shall overtake you whilst your slave Antar exists. O my son, replied Malik, may you ever live to insure our prosperity, and to protect us from all disgrace ! Malik told him what Jayda had done to him, and concluded by saying, O my nephew, your brother Jareer was the only cause of all our misfortunes ; for he, in his wit, was cajoling Rebia till he released them from bondage ; and we were not at all aware of our danger, till the party pounced on our heads, and twisted their cords round our arms, and had you not taken Maadi Kereb prisoner, never should we have been released. You are right, my uncle, said Antar, and I have reproved my brother for his behaviour. Antar returned to Ibla, and asked about her property : O my cousin, she replied, I have not lost even the value of a halter. By the life of thine eyes, exclaimed Antar, had Numan even detained the value of a single dirhem, I would have hung his brother Aswad, and have put to death the seven thousand prisoners. I would have pulled down Hirah on Numan's head, and would have slain every Arab he has assembled—I would have

marched to Modayin—I would have slain Chosroe, and made his balcony totter over his head.

Having now entered the mountains, Antar ordered Shiboob to set at liberty Prince Aswad and his people. Shiboob released them. But Antar cut off Maadi Kereb's hair with his own hand, saying, O Maadi Kereb, I have cut off your hair in revenge for Jayda's insults towards my cousin Ibla; and he ordered the slaves and attendants to turn out the prisoners bare-footed and naked, and bare-headed; and as they were executing Antar's commands, Art thou not ashamed, O son of Shedad, cried Aswad, to drive us away in this condition? We have not a horse to ride on! we have nothing to eat or drink! By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, reproach me not for my conduct towards any one of ye, for you are all going to assemble in a body against me, and you will return a second time to fight me, and the horses I should give you, verily I shall have to fight you for them; as to eatables, you will find on your way green weeds that you may graze on, and drink out of the puddles; but we at all events are a tribe entrenched within the mountains, and in the day of battle a small supply will feed us: ay, and most of ye say of me that Antar is a black slave and a bastard. These are the expressions you and others make use of towards me, and would do so were I to release you a thousand times: my best plan would be to kill ye all at once; thank God you are alive. Do not act thus,

O Aboolfawaris, said Aswad, for indeed I cannot walk on foot, no, not a quarter of a mile, so do give me something to carry me, or put me instantly to death, and deliver me from this ignominy. Hola! Ebe Reah, said Antar to Shiboob, bring here a she-camel, let him mount it and quit my presence, or I shall never be able to keep my sword off his neck. So Shiboob ran off, and with his usual ingenuity and sagacity, he chose out a she-camel, foundered and quite worn out—born lame and blind—weazy and broken-winded—grunting, loose-lipped, and toothless—crop-eared and spavined. When it was presented to the Prince, his soul was most indignant. Come, Prince, cried Shiboob, mount, whilst I hold the bridle, for I am terribly afraid it will fly away, for indeed it is one of that celebrated breed of Asafeer camels. May God curse the bowels that bore thee! cried the Prince; away with it, for I want it not; and he rushed out from the mountains blaspheming the fire. So they travelled in the most pitiable plight, feeding on the weeds of the earth, and drinking of the puddles, till they came nigh unto Hirah; and as the Arabs, whom King Numan had assembled, observed them, they eagerly ran towards them, inquiring what was the matter, so they related all that had happened to them with Antar. The news soon reached King Numan, who immediately hastened to meet his brother, and when he saw him in this plight, his gall was near bursting with rage and indignation.

He sent a noble steed for him, and mounting him on it, took him by his side, and questioned him about his adventures.

O King, cried out all the chiefs, lead us away to fight this Antar. Prepare then, said he, your warlike implements, let us depart. Who is this Antar, cried Hidjar, that you in person must march against him? Is there no one whom you can depute against Antar with one hundred men, to subdue his power and quench his iniquity? By the faith of an Arab, exclaimed King Numan, I myself will march against him; yet he, who shall do the deed in my presence, shall be distinguished and rewarded with the highest favours. This intelligence will soon reach Chosroe; he will hear of what Antar has done to me, and I fear he will think meanly of me, and will consign the dominion of the Arabs to some one else: but in three days have all your weapons of war ready. Whilst the warriors were preparing, said Hidjar to his people, Were I not afraid of rebelling against Numan, I would myself march to fight with Antar alone, and thus put a stop to all further trouble. Let us prepare and depart.

The above events were soon reported to Chosroe by the enemies of Numan, who, as soon as Antar first settled in the mountains of Radm, wrote to Chosroe to inform him that he had taken Prince Aswad prisoner and seven thousand men. Antar's

power, indeed, must have greatly augmented, cried Chosroe, thus to compass such deeds; he has forgotten what formerly happened to him when he was made captive by Monzar, and when he slew my Satrap Khosrewan. We accepted his excuses, and rewarded him with favours—we gave him a tiara and a turban—we sent him back to his tribe—and we thought he would be a firm friend of our government, but he has reverted to the foulness of his origin; he has even assaulted Numan, and the only remedy is at once to tear out his lips, and destroy all his race, or the vagabond Arabs will pretend to predatory incursions even upon us.

Chosroe waited patiently till he heard of the captivity of Maadi Kereb, and that Antar had released his women and families from the power of King Numan, and all the property of his cousin Ibla, and the precious jewels, in exchange for Prince Aswad, and the seven thousand men of the tribe of Lakhm. At this Chosroe's indignation was kindled, and he swore by the fire that he would slay Antar. He ordered his vizier Mubidan to levy twenty thousand men from Khorasan, and twenty thousand from Dilem, and he appointed to the command a Satrap named Wirdishan, and this Wirdishan was a proud haughty man, whom fire even could not subdue; and he gave the expedition in charge to him, because he could not confide in the Arab hordes, saying, Be you their leader; exert yourself nobly,

that our power may be respected. Wirdishan mounted, and over his head were raised the standards and dragons of Persia. He marched night and day till he came nigh unto Hirah, where he was greatly surprised at seeing the immense multitude assembled.

Now that was the very day fixed on for the march against Antar, and all the troops were ready to the number of seventy thousand. Numan went forth to meet the Persians, and saluted Wirdishan, saying, What has so agitated the heart of the just King, that he should put in motion one like you to engage the Arab hordes? Numan, said Wirdishan, accounts of your enfeebled state have frequently been made to him, and he has heard of what Antar has done to you; that he took your brother prisoner, and that you ransomed him with cattle. This has disturbed him, and he has sent me to you to remove this trouble from you. Verily he has lied, who has told this of me, exclaimed Numan; I have assembled these armies, and this is the day appointed for the march against him, and I will tear his life out from his sides. This is a proof of your weakness, said Wirdishan, for you are resolved on marching with seventy thousand men against only four thousand.

After a repose of two days at Hirah, he departed for the mountains of Radm, not mingling with Numan's troops, on the contrary, reviling and reproaching them.

Now Antar had despatched his brother Jareer to the land of Hirah. Return not, said he, till you have ascertained what King Numan is about. Jareer departed, habited as a slave, and reached Hirah, where he sojourned till the arrival of the Satrap Wirdishan; and when the armies set out, he made all haste back to the mountains, and came to his brother, to whom he related the intelligence concerning the march of the numerous host against him. My brother, said he, I never beheld a haughtier fellow than that Wirdishan; for he has no regard, no consideration for any one. But Antar on hearing this gave a roar that terrified him, saying, What a bother you make about all this, you bastard. By the faith of an Arab, I will not leave one of them to guide them in their flight, were they even as numerous as the sands in the valley of Cornelians!

And as he consulted with King Zoheir about what was to be done, Son of my uncle, replied Zoheir, we have no other resource but the stroke of the cleaving scimitars, and patience under the dark clouds of dust. We will fight in your presence with the drawn sword, till not one of us, not a living soul remains. We will defend our wives and families, till the horses sport with our skulls in the battle. O King, eminent in virtue, said Antar, affairs have almost arrived at that pass indeed. But do not you or your sons join to the fight till the enemy has hacked my body with their long spears. My

wish is to take with me one thousand warriors, and march against these advancing armies. I will not permit them to reach this spot, but after spear thrusts that shall make the stoutest quake. Son of my mother, said Shiboob, I also will go with you, but on condition that you attend to my counsel and my advice ; for an affair conducted with skill is more efficacious than the boldest feats of arms.

Why should I not listen to your suggestions, said Antar, when I see they are judicious? so speak ; what is your wish, O Ebe Reah? My advice, O my brother, said he, is, that you march as you have said, with one thousand horsemen. I will conduct you, and conceal you in the valley of Torrents, through which the hostile armies must pass ; and where they will be greatly crowded. When they alight, do you rush out upon them, and shout at them, particularly if they should halt there in the night ; for then indeed you will see wonders in the blood that will flow and stream, and then will necks be hacked off in the contest. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, your advice, Shiboob, is excellent, and the plan infallible. And immediately setting off with a thousand horsemen of the tribe of Carad, and Oorwah's men, he continued his march till he reached the valley, which not being far from the mountains of Radm, Antar anticipated the armies of Numan by half a day ; and whilst he concealed his men in the ravines, Shiboob ascended the loftiest mountain, and stationed himself as their

look-out, casting his eyes to the south and to the north.

About mid-day there arose a dust, that obscured the whole region. In an hour the dust opened, and discovered armies like the rolling waves in a tempest. Shiboob shouted to his brother Antar—Son of my mother, be on your guard: prepare for the conflict, for your enemies will arrive by evening; and this night chiefs will purchase life by the exertion of slaves; and it shall be a night, the horrors of which will turn a new-born child gray.

Antar hastened away with his associates, and all being mounted, and armed with spears, and clad in steel and polished corslets, they stood firm, expecting the arrival of the armies; and the warriors were like lions concealed in a thicket.

King Numan and his brother Aswad were in the rear of the army as we observed, and he was greatly hurt at the words of Wirdishan. When the armies reached the valley of Torrents, King Numan halted without the valley, alarmed at the embarrassment of the defile, and the length of the pass. The Persians marched on, headed by the Satrap Wirdishan, like the most rebellious of the fiends; and he was in the utmost anxiety to cast his eyes on Antar; equally so was Hidjar; but they did not enter the valley till night had obscured it with darkness, and had thrown a gloom over all the country.

It was at that moment the horse thundered down

with their riders: the dust and the clouds of sand thickened. The darkness of the night was rendered more frightful by a tremendous storm of wind, that blinded the sight. The sand arose against their faces; and the whole region was in tumult and confusion, from the right to the left. The Arab and the Persian were promiscuously crowded together. The spot being narrow and confined, all were huddled into one mass. At that instant out rushed Antar with his troops of Absians, fearless of death, undaunted in peril. He vociferated in the front of the troops—the mountains rebounded, and the whole valley tottered. The Absians replied with a similar shout, whilst Antar still roared—Ye black kettles of Persians! I am Antar, the cleaver of skulls. The foe heard Antar's yell, and every limb quivered. The Persians muttered out abuse; but their voices faltered; they imagined the valley was going to crush them, and that they saw death in the spot whence Antar issued. He roared, and horror fell upon every horseman: lives were torn from the indistinct forms; horsemen unsheathed the scimitar; and the black gloom of the night became darker still. The mind was in despair; troops disappeared; designs were glorified; falchions glittered, and blood ran down the sides of the valley. Every one doubted whether the heavens had not been precipitated on the earth; they imagined the valley was filled with swords plundering their existence, and spears spoiling them of their lives.

Friend feared for friend ; foes were appeased ; and relations grieved. Cowards wished they had wings with which to escape by flight ; and the water-mills of war turned round. Blood gushed from jugular veins ; shrieks and screams re-echoed ; blood burst from wounds, and crowds waved like the sea. The east and west were in obscurity ; skulls were hewn off from necks ; and the thrust of the spear fell at random. Blood streamed upon the ground and earth ; and from the terrors of that night youth became gray-haired—torments descended upon them.

In an hour the Persian troopers retreated on their rear ; and the Chief Hidjar exclaimed, O my cousins, let us seek the spot whence we came ; truly we have erred, in not halting with King Numan : and thus saying, he retired.

But as to Antar, he was hard labouring in the cause of destruction and carnage ; he left them wielding their swords one against the other, and sought the extremity of the valley, accompanied with Oorwah's men, and his uncle Zakhmet Uljewad, and his father Shedad, and a party of the tribe of Carad ; all were directing themselves against the Persians, to overwhelm them with insupportable calamities. They smote off the heads of every opponent, and left them dead.

They were in this situation when the Chief Hidjar came ambling on the back of his horse, waving in his hand a falchion, sparkling through the intense obscurity of the night. I am the Chief Hidjar, he

cried; but he had not time to finish his harangue, for Shiboob had drawn an arrow from his quiver, and had fixed it on his bow. He shot it at Hidjar, and the arrow pierced a mortal part of his horse, which stumbled, and hurled him with the crown of his head on the ground; and as he endeavoured to spring on his feet, lo! the Chief Shedad rushed upon him, and wounded him in the arm with his sword; and when he attempted to seize him—No, no! I am Hidjar, the son of Aamir, he cried. Worthless art thou, exclaimed Shedad—unavailing are thy words; neither is there any glory in whom thou dost boast: and he dismounted and bound fast his arms.

Rebia and Amarah were behind him, and when they saw what had befallen the Chief Hidjar, and heard Antar's yells, they trembled for their lives. Fly, my gallant brother, fly! cried Rebba to Amarah—or Antar will make us drink of the cup of death, and extermination. So they fled, and Hadifah with them, for Antar had not recognised them.

The battle raged till midnight; the horses sported with the skulls of the horsemen, and the valley of Torrents being too confined for the multitudes, the Persians were routed in the presence of the Arabs. Scimitars were plied among them; spears plundered them of their lives. At that moment advanced Wirdishan in front of the Persians, surrounded with a body of his host. In his hand he wielded an immense mace, and he came on bellow-

ing like a lion; and in the excess of his alarms and horrors, he scowled round to the right and to the left. On that night were slain only five Absians. Wirdishan having resolved on flight, Antar pounced down upon him, and drove his spear through his right side, and it issued out through his left, and hurled him on the ground. When the Persians beheld the fate of their Chief, they wheeled about their horses and fled.

Now when the darkness became illumined, and the day dawned on the survivors, the foe, horse and foot, rushed out of the valley, whilst Shiboob overthrew them with his arrows, and Oorwah with his people pierced them with their spears till their numbers were diminished, and all hope of relief cut off.

Antar and his warriors returned to the valley of Torrents, where they saw the blood flowing as if in large rivers, and as to the groans of the dying and wounded—no one pitied them. The whole valley was full, crammed with the wounded, and the overthrown, and the lifeless carcasses. Away with the spoils of the dead, said Antar; and depart, and drive the prisoners to the mountains; for this night may be reckoned a night indeed—for by the faith of noble Arabs who keep their promises and engagements, were I not afraid that King Zoheir might be uneasy at our absence, I would attack King Numan here also, and would not leave one alive in this desert, were even Chosroe Nushirvan himself with

them. It will be better for us to fight in the mountains, said Oorwah.

On that night they had made eight hundred prisoners; and when they had collected the scattered horses and dispersed arms, they returned seeking the mountains. Antar was overjoyed at what had passed, and he meditated on the horrors he had endured. Oorwah being by his side, he addressed him thus:

“Hail, O Oorwah! O valley of Torrents, hail—
“hail, for ever hail, my cousin! How many are
“the youths, whose heads on that night became
“grey, beardless as they were! How many heroes
“saw the horrors of death, who hoped to see the
“morrow’s dawn! Death served them with the
“cup of absinth, with my sword, and then said,
“Much good may it do you. O what a night I
“passed with those who beheld death with pride,
“Absian heroes, who when they are ranked—their
“rank degrades all that is most high and eminent.
“When their steeds were spurred over the plain, a
“peal of thunder was in their movement. Shouldst
“thou ask of me, O Ibla, thou wouldst hear intel-
“ligence that would cure even an unknown malady.
“I drove away thy foes when they came, all haughty
“warriors, seeking my destruction. I assuaged
“my heart among the Persians, and I have slain
“that imperial Wirdishan. I have tempered my
“sword with the blood of glory, that flowed like a

“ torrent through the valley. Tell Numan, I am a
“ lion, with my sword and my spear. My drink is
“ of the blood of warriors, when their horsemen
“ have drank of the cup of extinction. Demand
“ justice on the day of battle. Should the foe out-
“ rage, I will redress the wrong. Verily, glory is
“ in the day of contention. When my thrust over-
“ whelms the assaulting tribes, I glut the birds with
“ their carcasses, as I destroy them with the edge
“ of my scimitar. I am appointed for the welfare
“ of the tribe of Abs, their glory is mine—their
“ honour is mine.”

As to King Numan, he had halted as we mentioned, on the outside of the valley with his Arabs, resolved to move in the morning and join the Persians, when lo ! the fugitives from the valley of Torrents rapidly advanced, exclaiming, Misery ! woe and destruction ! Instantly the horsemen sprung towards their horses, and inquired the news. They related what Antar had done to the Persian forces, that he had slain Wirdishan, and had routed his whole army of Arabs and Persians. Struck with dismay at this news, Numan's forces determined on immediate flight, fearful of death and annihilation. He himself also mounted, alarmed that his troops should run away in disorder : and the horsemen having remained on the backs of their horses quaking through fear of Antar, the irresistible hero, till morning dawned, Numan ordered them to march ;

so they proceeded, headed by Prince Aswad, at whose side rode Maadi Kereb. Enter not the valley but with great caution, said Numan, for I calculate something of this kind may still happen to you.

On this account they halted at the head of the valley, and made the Arab tribes march in first, who went forwards brandishing their swords in their hands, but in the greatest terror of Antar, son of Shedad. They entered the valley, and heard the groans of the dying, and saw the torrents of blood; and they were astonished at Antar's masterly contrivance; and though there was not one but was in the utmost consternation, affection for Antar sunk deep into the heart of Numan, and he felt very desirous of the marriage with the daughter of his king Motegeredeh (he had once demanded her, but his messenger had been sent back unsuccessful); for he thought within himself, were I related by marriage to this tribe, my power would be strengthened, and my influence increased.

He thus marched on till he approached the mountains, but Antar had reached them first, with his prisoners and plunder. All exulted in his exploits; the delight was universal; and their hearts were quite merry at the result of the engagement.

Antar advanced towards King Zoheir, and kissing his hand, related what he had done to the Persians, and how many he had slain, and how many he had captured. King Zoheir was highly gratified. O King, said Antar, it is still our duty to prepare

to engage the armies of Numan, and protect our women and families.

So Jareer was directed to order the Absians to take their arms, and issue out into the open space in front of the mountains, ready for action. Let the slaves, said Antar, be divided on the two sides of the defile, and order them to collect a great quantity of stones, and every one they see going forth to fight, they may let pass; but those they see returning, they must stone to death: and if they should see that we are all crowded promiscuously with the enemy, and that we are retreating, then too they must hurl at us the largest fragments of rocks, and prevent us from re-entering the defile.

Jareer having communicated Antar's orders, they prepared for battle, and issued from the valley into the open space, like wild beasts starting from their dens. They mounted their horses armed for the conflict, having slung on their long spears, and girded on their polished scimitars. The slaves also came forth, and stood at the entrance of the defile, and the head of the pass of the mountain, armed with bows and arrows, fierce as male camels. King Zoheir and his sons also mounted, and over his head floated the eagle standard. The battalions advanced, and the squadrons were drawn up. The race of Carad stood forth, and at their head was Antar, like a lion on horseback.

It was scarcely mid-day when the army of King Numan approached like the billows of the tem-

pestuous ocean. Numan advanced, and over his head waved the ensigns and banners; and as he was about to halt, the drums were sounded, and the earth trembled far and wide. As soon as they came up to the mountain, they vociferated in one universal shout, that deafened the hearing, and made the hearts of the timid quake. The Absians answered them with a still louder shout, and dashed their spear-heads against the ground.

King Numan's pavilion was pitched just opposite the mouth of the mountain. Mooferridj also halted with the Shibanians on the right of Numan; the tribes of Zebeed, and Khitaam, and Morad; and on the left were the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah; and on their left were the four thousand Kendehan troopers, whose hearts were greatly exasperated at the capture of their Chief Hidjar.

Antar stood in front of the Absians like a ferocious lion. He took his feet out of his stirrups, and crossed them over the neck of Abjer: he leant upon his tall spear armed with death, for he was entirely unconcerned at the multitude of the advancing forces. He smiled, and seemed exulting on the back of his horse. His father Shedad was on his right, and Oorwah on his left, and the race of Carad behind him. No sooner did the tribe of Kendeh see him than their rage increased; they advanced, and the tribe of Shiban, and his furious adversaries to the number of five hundred followed; all rushed upon Antar, seeking him with their spears and their

swords. On to the fight, O Ebeool ebyez ! cried Antar to Oorwah, do you and your men trample down these paltry fellows.

Oorwah did as he directed, and met them with one hundred of his men, and they commenced the battle and the conflict. They thrust at each other with the barbs of their long spears ; the dust rose and thickened, but as the numbers increased against Oorwah's people, Antar strengthened them with a hundred more horsemen of the Caradians, with whom went his uncle and his father. Now was their fury let loose ; the horses dashed against each other, and skulls flew off from bodies. Antar stood behind his men, and whenever he marked any of them falter, he assaulted the foe like a lion in armour ; neither did he desist till he had driven away the enemy, when he returned to his post again to watch over the safety of his friends. Swords continued to labour, and blood to be spilt, and men to fight, and the flame of war to blaze, till the day closed, when the tribe of Kendeh were completely broken, and were in the greatest alarm and distress ; many of them escaped by flight, Oorwah and his men having vanquished them by the encouragement of Antar. More than seven hundred of the Kendehans were killed, but only twenty of Oorwah's brave spear-armed heroes.

On their return Antar met them and congratulated them on their success. You know, my cousins, he cried, you cannot rise to honours but by

patience in adversity ; and now indeed this day you are clothed in robes of fresh glory, and only those friends have been slain whose deaths could not be deferred : it is not the steel that decides in such points. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, we could not have routed the foe but by your aid ; this affair is all owing to your intrepidity and your good fortune, for in our troubles we had recourse to you, and your arm would have prevailed had even mountains moved against us. Antar thanked him for his compliment, and they all returned to the mountains. As to King Zoheir, he felt himself emboldened by the events of that day, and rejoiced in the victory over his foes. He bestowed abundant praises and thanks on Antar, meeting him with joy and congratulation. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we shall never doubt about the discomfiture of our enemies as long as you live for us ; whilst you exist we shall never experience adversity or calamity. Antar dismounted from Abjer, and wished to kiss King Zoheir's hand, but the king bent down towards him and kissed him between the eyes. Know, O king, said Antar, that I have made a calculation of our forces and that of the enemy, and we are superior to them in numbers. King Numan's army consists of seventy thousand bridles, and we amount to four thousand, but every one of our men can trample down a thousand of Numan's, so by this calculation we are even numerically superior to them. O Aboolfawaris,

you are right, said King Zoheir, for where in all Numan's thousands is there a knight like you to encounter and destroy?

In the meantime King Numan had alighted in his magnificent pavilion, and was in consternation at the deeds of the Absians and their hero Antar. This is a fortunate man, he said to himself, for he has made war his habit, his meat, and drink. They reposed that night till morning, when the men arose for the battle and the combat. King Numan mounted, and he placed on his right his brother Prince Aswad, and Maadi Kereb and Jayda, with twenty thousand horsemen, and on his left were Mooferridj, and Rebia and his brother, with the tribe of Fazarah, with twenty thousand more, and he himself stood in the centre with the remainder of the army. Antar also drew up the Absians right and left, centre and flanks. He stationed Oorwah and his men on the right, and with him one thousand horsemen; and on his left were his father Shedad and his uncle Zakhmet ul Jewad, to whom he added one thousand horse. He himself advanced, and with him were one thousand also: he went round to all the heroes, exclaiming that he would lead them to the contest.

When all the forces were drawn up, and every one was in his place, behold the chief Amarah urged his piebald steed between the two armies, and exclaimed in a loud voice, What is it, my cousins,

that drives you on to your own destruction? What have you seen in this black slave that you dare the enmity of King Numan on his account, and have even roused the anger of Chosroe against you? Do you think that this perfidious slave is able to defend you against all these armies that are assembled against you? And you, O King Zoheir, who call yourself the king of the tribes Abs and Adnan, of Fazarah and Ghiftan, of Marah and Dibyan, have you deigned to ask assistance of a black slave, a fellow so worthless and mean? By the faith of an Arab you have clothed us in shame: you had best deliberate again on the state of your affairs. Avert your decided fate; separate yourself from Antar; seize the bastard, and deliver him to me that I may make him over to King Numan, and secure his protection for you. Then let us all join in one party, and return all of us to our native land, and we will wed Ibla to him whose rank equals hers, and whose connexion equals hers—the great chief Amarah for instance, whom all the Arabs know; and thus you, Zoheir and your tribe, will be saved from perdition and destruction. Amarah had not finished his harangue when up came Shedad, and exclaimed, May thy mother soon mourn for thee! may thy family and all thy tribe witness thy annihilation! thou foul coward! thou son of a two-thousand-horned-cuckold! thou Amarah. How oft has he defended thy women from the sharp sword and lacerating spear! But the best thing we can do

is, to ply our edged swords and tall spears till either these Arabs slaughter us or we slaughter them ; till either you exterminate us or we exterminate you. Ay, and they will do it too, my brother, cried Amarah to Rebia ; by the faith of an Arab, I heartily wish I had not come out into the plain, and had not ventured on a word, for I cannot possibly stand this battle and this contest. So he threw away his spear out of his hand, and shrunk back amidst the shouts from the tribe of Carad. Antar longed to fall upon him, but his father prevented him, saying, O my son, it would be an indignity to yourself to stir a step against this cuckold.

They were thus engaged in conversation, when, lo ! Jayda appeared in the midst of the plain like a strong tower immersed in steel ; her heart and soul ulcered with anguish. She was robed in garments of black on account of Khalid ; and when she was between the two ranks, she thus expressed herself :

“ O by my tribe, tears have festered my cheeks,
“ and in the greatness of my agony sleep has
“ abandoned me. These mourning garments have
“ debilitated my energies, and sickness has weakened
“ my bones and my skin ; for I had a hero whom
“ a black slave by his oppression and violence made
“ to drink of death. The full moon indeed fell to
“ the earth when the arrow was aimed at him, sped
“ from the hand of the slave. Now he is gone : I
“ am left to my afflictions and griefs, and I endure
“ my distresses in solitude. The sword mourns

“him, now he is gone, and in the sheath it bewails
“its condition. O thou dead ! mourners have wept
“him in the mountains of Fala and the land of
“Nedjd. He was like a branch in form—the re-
“volutions of fortune cut him off—alas ! how cut
“him off ! O by my tribe, who will assuage my
“sorrows, and will regard his engagements with
“me, now Khalid is gone ?”

Jayda had scarcely finished, when the tribes of Zebeed sent forth one general shout that made the mountains tremble ; they remembered the death of their chief Khalid ; they poured down upon Antar, uncovering their heads and lightening their garments, to the number of five thousand, and about two thousand of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam followed them ; they all attacked, led on by Maadi Kereb bellowing like a lion. Antar observed their assault : he took with him three hundred horsemen of the tribes of Abs and Carad, and met the seven thousand ; and whatever he smote he cleft in twain, and wherever he thrust he slew. The horses closed upon him ; he yelled at them, and they dispersed, hurling off their riders. He raved as raves a camel ; his eyeballs were fiery red ; foam swelled from the corners of his lips, so that every one that beheld him exclaimed, God ! how dreadful ! They were now in the fiercest of the contest, when Jayda excited the warriors against him, and rallied the men back to the conflict. He rushed upon her like a ghoul or a hungry wild beast, and descended upon her like

the descent of the most voracious lion. Jayda would have fled, but he overtook her, and pierced her through the sides; he broke two of her ribs, having burst through her double armour. In her love of life she threw her arms round her horse's neck, and sprang beyond the dust. When Maadi Kereb saw Antar and what he had done to Jayda, he shouted at him, and rushed upon him, exclaiming, *Hola!* thou bastard, dost think thy every attempt will succeed? This day I will take my vengeance of thee, and will in thy death wipe out my disgrace. But Antar met him and roared at him; he hemmed him in, and closing all means of escape, he drew forth *Dhami*, and struck Maadi Kereb a dreadful blow. The sword fell on Maadi Kereb's helmet and cleft it, and also the wadding and the edge of the sword even reached Maadi Kereb's head, and wounded him severely, and nearly killed him. At last he threw his arms round his horse and fled, the blood streaming down his face. As soon as Prince Aswad saw what Antar had done, he made an attack against *Oorwah* with his twenty thousand, which Antar perceiving, he said to *Shiboob*, Go to King *Zoheir*, and tell him not to quit the mouth of the defile, but to send me one thousand of his warriors that I may meet King *Numan* and his whole army. Antar shouted on *Abjer*; he encountered the horses' chests, and poured down on them like the rush of a torrent; he slew the men; he destroyed the warriors, and overwhelmed them with

his shouts and his roars in disgrace and ruin, hacking their joints. But when the thousand arrived they made one universal shout of O by Abs, O by Adnan! They assailed the armies and the horsemen; men encountered men, and heroes heroes; blood flowed and streamed; the long spears laboured and also the polished falchions. None were to be seen but the slayers and the slain; the destroyers and the destroyed. Every horseman roared in terrors, and the king of death despatched his messengers to grasp lives. In a short time every resource was resorted to. Every sharp sword continued its blows till the heart and mind were bewildered, and the earth rocked under the weight of the armies, and the undaunted heroes of Aboul-fawaris Antar.

This continued till evening came on, when of the Princes' army were slain an innumerable and incalculable host; the remainder took to flight, for in the contest with Antar they beheld death and perdition. The Absians returned exulting in their victory and triumph, and extolling Antar till they came to King Zoheir, when Antar dismounted, and wished to kiss the king's hand, but he had also dismounted, and meeting him, kissed him between the eyes, saying, Admirable are thy deeds, O protector of Abs and Adnan, thou hero of the age! By the faith of noble Arabs, you have this day appeased all my sorrows. By the life of thy head, O king of the age, said

Antar, I must absolutely drag that King Numan from beneath his ensigns and standards, and must make you reign in his stead over all the Arabs! After this they entered the mountains, and reposed with their wives and families.

CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER the retreat of the army, Numan summoned to his presence Amroo, son of Nefeela, and consulted with him about making peace with the Absians. My advice, replied he, is, that to-morrow morning you repeat the attack ; perhaps they will be discomfited, and will demand peace, and that would be more suitable to your dignity. Numan approved of his vizier's counsel. The next day both armies started up, eager for the combat. King Numan mounted and arranged the standards over his head. Thus also did the Absians, headed by Antar, the lord of battles. The ranks being drawn up, Antar was anxious to exhibit himself in the field of battle, when lo ! a dust arose, and veiling the land, seemed suspended over every quarter of the atmosphere ; and there came forth a renowned warrior of immense bulk, like an elephant or a towering palm-tree. The combatants gazed at him in amazement, for he was a victorious warrior, one of the haughty tyrants of Arabia ; his name was Ghasik, son of Ashab ; and he was followed by twenty thousand horsemen. King Numan had long been accustomed to make him presents, and previous to his expedition against the Absians he had sent to Ghasik to request

his assistance. Now Ghasik was one of the thousand proud tyrants in that age of ignorance, and his form was one of the wonders of that period. He fought with various weapons as a horseman and on foot, and when he ran on foot he would outstrip the snorting steeds. His countries were Tahl and Zal, and he and his tribe worshipped the great dogstar. When Numan's letter reached him he read it, and having understood it, he called out to his people, and instantly set out for the land of Hirah. On his arrival he was told that Numan had already marched, so he proceeded after him till he came up, as we have described; and when Numan knew of his arrival, he went out to meet him, and told him all that had happened: how the tribe of Abs had defeated his armies and horsemen. O king of the age, said Ghasik, this day will I make the Absians mark the horrors I will perform. He dismounted from his horse, and threw off his armour and his coat of mail, till he remained only in his common clothes, his head uncovered and his feet bare. He snatched up two darts that were like sparks of fire; he stood forth between the two ranks on foot and unarmed; and as he approached the hostile armies, O tribe of Abs, he cried, stand forth knight to knight, or ten to a knight, or a hundred to a knight, or a thousand to a knight; and if you still desire less odds, attack me with your whole force that I may encounter ye all alone, and may repulse ye with the force of my single arm and my single

elbow. And here I am, without armour or polished mail, for I know that where death is protracted, armour avails not. When he had thus spoken, he swaggered over the plain of heroes till the senses of the wisest and the oldest, as well as of the youngest, were confounded, and thus spoke :

“ Armour repels not the javelin of death ; so
 “ stand forth, O noble heroes ; stand forth, and be-
 “ hold the battle of a youthful hero, firm and resolute
 “ in the scene of contention.”

King Zoheir was stupefied and amazed at Ghasik's deeds and heroism ; but Antar, perceiving the state of King Zoheir's mind, exclaimed, O king, what means this apprehension and alarm ? Calm your mind ; brighten your eye ; for by the protection of an Arab, I will put to the rout the whole of this army, were they even as numerous as the scattered locusts ; and were I conscious that my single arm would not suffice, I would take ten warriors, with whom I would dash into the midst of King Numan's forces, and I would drag him away either alive or dead, prisoner or a carcass. These words comforted the heart of King Zoheir, and he recovered from his fears and his consternation ; and just as Antar was about to dart forward against Ghasik, a horseman anticipated him, and attacked him. He was a celebrated one among the bravest Absians, and one of their most illustrious knights. He rushed upon Ghasik and attempted to charge him, but Ghasik gave him not time to wheel round ;

he shouted at him, and smote him with one of his javelins; it fell between the paps and issued out between the shoulders. The two armies were astounded at the blow, for the weapon passed through the horseman and the steel armour he wore. A second stood forth against Ghasik, but he overthrew him; a third, he deprived him of life; a fourth, he united him to his comrades; and a fifth, he left him despairing of existence: and thus he continued till he had slain twenty horsemen. But Antar was afraid that were he now to oppose him the Arabs would say, Antar stood forth against a knight without armour or polished mail; or Ghasik might even say, he attacked me when I was fatigued. Whilst Antar was reflecting on this dreadful affair, lo! his father Shedad stood forth. Ghasik permitted him not to charge, but took him prisoner instantly. No sooner saw Antar the fate of his father than a fire blazed in his heart, and he resolved on the attack, but Oorwah anticipated him. Ghasik had now called for his armour, in which having clad himself, he met Oorwah and assaulted him; he soon wearied him, and thwarted all his efforts, and stretching out his arm like the neck of a black camel, he seized him by the rings of his armour, and grasping him in his hand as if he were a sparrow, he threw him to his slaves to secure with cords, and they placed him by the side of Shedad. Fired by this double calamity, Antar rushed upon Ghasik like a devouring lion. Ghasik received him as the

parched up land the first of the rain. These sturdy warriors fought like ravenous wild beasts; they began the blow and the clash, the retreat and the advance, till the senses and the minds of all present were bewildered. They continued till mid-day, when Ghasik repented of his rash expedition, and of his combat with Antar.

I have no other resource, said he to himself, but to practise a stratagem on him; so, desisting from the conflict: Holà! O Antar, he cried, I have heard that you are one of those knights that love fair play, but this day I perceive you act not impartially towards me. Eh! what justice do you want? demanded Antar. You have engaged me, said Ghasik, when I was fatigued, and I now wish to return and change my horse, then will I come back to attack you, and I will not quit you till this affair be decided. You shall not escape, said Antar, if you wish it: surrender yourself, that you may be a ransom for the warriors you have already taken; or by the faith of an Arab, and by the life of Ibla's two eyes, with me the most sacred of oaths, I will make you a proverb among men! What! cried Ghasik, shall I surrender myself to you without fighting? Will not the Arabs say, May God curse the father and mother of Ghasik—what did he see in Antar that he surrendered himself without a blow? But if you are one of the horsemen that love justice, draw the spike out of your spear, and I will take off the spike out of mine; then let us

engage in the field of battle, and he who touches his antagonist three times, let him do what he pleases with him. Antar thought him sincere. Just as you please, said he. Ghasik took off the spike from his spear, and Antar did so likewise, believing he should thus be on a par with him. Thus was Ghasik strengthened in his courage, and he again had recourse to his stratagems; he snatched from under his thigh a javelin, and shook it till it coiled round his hand; he aimed it at Antar, saying, Take that, thou slave! thou wretch! As soon as Antar perceived Ghasik had deceived him, he tried to avoid the javelin, but he could not; it struck him on the shoulder between the armour and clothes. Antar was severely wounded; he roared out at Ghasik in a voice that made the mountains totter: Thy blow has failed; now prepare, coward, for the blow of the voracious lion. He assailed him, and pierced him with the spikeless spear he held in his hand, and he drove it right through his back quivering; and Ghasik fell dead.

When Numan saw what Antar had done, and how he had pierced Ghasik with a mere staff through the chest, driving it out at his back, rending the steel and the corslet, he said to his attendants: Verily, such a thrust no one could drive—no, neither man nor demon, not even the fiends who rebelled against our lord Soliman. Our character is blasted by this knight, whose equal the age cannot produce: Now is the time to order a general

assault, cried they all, now that Antar is wounded. King Numan did so, and the twenty thousand made the attack as if in one body. But when Antar reached the mountains, King Zoheir came up to him and kissed him between the eyes, thanking and extolling him. He entered the valley, having first recommended King Zoheir and the Absians to stand firm at the entrance of the defile till his wound was dressed; then will I return to the contest, he added; and he entered the tents, and extracting the javelin, cauterised the wound. In the mean time Ghasik's army had assailed the Absians with a force amounting to twenty thousand bridles. The Absians received them with undaunted hearts and Arabian courage. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood streamed and flowed—joints were hewn asunder. Numan, perceiving the steadiness of the Absians, commanded his left, to the number of twenty thousand, to join him. They made an attack like the attack of a single individual. Soon the numbers increased upon the Absians, and their cries for assistance became louder; but as they were in the thickest of the fight, the chief Antar appeared, shouting in a voice that made the mountains tremble, and the hollows resound: Worthless dastards! Antar, the son of Shedad, is coming. For when his wound was dressing, Ibla came to him; she bound it up, and wept over him. Weep not, said he, for by the life of thine eyes, and the black of thine eyebrows, I care not for those wounds; to me

they are sweeter than the draught of wine : but, for thy sake, I will put to confusion the armies of King Numan, had he even with him all mankind, and the fiends to boot. He and Ibla were thus conversing, when lo ! Shiboob appeared like a male ostrich : Hola ! son of my mother, he cried, join the Absians, for King Numan has ordered all his armies to attack them on every side and direction. Antar bellowed and roared ; he started from the ground on to the back of his Abjer, and sprang forth seeking the engagement, till he reached the scene of horrors, and joined the Absians, who were worsted in the presence of that immense concourse of warriors. So he shouted as we have mentioned ; and he assaulted the enemy with a heart that bounded at encountering dangers : at his attack, sorrows were erased from the heart of the Absians ; and as they heard his roar, their souls revived ; their courage was renovated, and they fought in a manner to startle the boldest. As to Antar, where he struck he cleft asunder ; and where he thrust, he destroyed ; and when the heroes resisted him, he yelled at them, and made them shrink back in horror. He wrested a horseman from the back of his horse ; he raised him in his hand like a pole, and whirling him round as a sling, he struck a second with him down ; he precipitated the two, and made them drink of the cups of death. The warriors fled in dismay before him, and every one was horror-struck at his strength.

When Numan saw how Antar and the Absians had routed his army, he ordered his right to attack, and they also amounted to twenty thousand. This mighty host, calculated at sixty thousand, assailed the Absians, King Zoheir always assisting them with a hundred after hundred, till not a single one remained. But their hearts were encouraged by Antar, for they knew he was a resistless hero and a dreadnought lion. At that period the tribe of Abs was the most renowned among the Arabs for courage; and at that moment they were fighting the battle of life and death, and they encountered the forces of King Numan with hearts to which death was sweet and easy. The two armies were mingled together; the sword and spear laboured among heads and carcasses; blood flowed like lakes; God glorified that awful, dreadful day! where the steel armour alone defended bodies, and God prospered what Antar performed in his intrepidity; he overwhelmed them in disgrace and ruin, and executed deeds that will be commemorated for ages, for deaths were at hand, predestined by the will of the God of good and evil. The battle continued to rage between the two armies till the day fled with the light, and night came on in obscurity, and the warriors were separated, after they had filled the earth with the dead.

Numan descended to his pavilions, as he said to himself, Were I related to the Absians, every one on whom the sun shines would stand in awe of me; and

Numan had scarcely alighted when the Arab chiefs, and Prince Aswad at their head, came unto him: O King of the world, said they, our opinion is, that you put to death these two fellows we have in our power (they were Shedad and Oorwah); I will slay them to-morrow, said he, and Prince Aswad rushed from Numan's presence in a great passion; but when they were gone, he sent for his vizier Amroo, son of Nefilah, and imparted to him all the love he felt in his heart for Mootegeredeh, King Zoheir's daughter. What do you wish? said the vizier. To marry Mootegeredeh, and make peace with the Absians; he replied, for were I assisted by such a tribe as this, or a hero like Antar, I should by their means strengthen myself against the deserts and the cities. O King, said the vizier, with respect to the marriage rely on me; but on condition, that you order into your presence Shedad and Oorwah, robe them in garments of honour, and treat them kindly. I will then lead them to King Zoheir, and will demand his daughter for you, and I will not return till all matters are arranged. Numan approved of his vizier's advice, and he reposed that night in tranquillity, for his heart was at ease.

As to the tribe of Abs, when they returned to the mountain; Console your heart and brighten your eye, O King, said Antar, by the life of your head, to-morrow I will decide their fate: I will disperse this army were it as numerous as the sands; and King Zoheir was comforted.

Thus they entered the mountains, and slept that night till morning, when the chiefs of the Ab-sians mounted, brandishing their sharp-edged swords and slinging on their lances. King Zoheir and his sons also mounted, and over his head floated the eagle standard : they were drawn up in front of the mountains like lions of the cavern, and before them stood Antar like a rock. He seated his body on the back of his horse, and drawing his feet out of the stirrups, he folded them over the neck of Abjer. King Numan, as soon as it was day, prohibited any further hostilities ; he sent for Shedad and Oorwah, and investing them with robes of honour, he presented them some fine steeds with housings of gold ; and as he imparted to them his love for Moote-gerekeh, he required them to assist his vizier Amroo ; and when they had promised to do so, he directed his vizier to accompany them. The vizier accordingly set out with Shedad and Oorwah, and repaired to the tribe of Abs.

When Prince Aswad saw what King Numan had done, how he had released Shedad and Oorwah, and had sent his vizier to the tribe of Abs to negotiate a peace, he was highly enraged and indignant, and he said to the Arab chiefs, Be calm, till I see what more passes between them. If he makes peace with them, I will write to King Chosroe, and communicate what my brother Numan has done, that he has made peace with the tribe of Abs, and connected himself with them by marriage, though their

slave was wounded, and they had retired to the mountains, and there was nothing more to be done but to take them prisoners. My brother has acted most shamefully, and he has betrayed the imperial government on account of his worldly lusts. I am now convinced it was Numan himself who ordered the Absians to lie concealed in the valley of Torrents; and it was he who plotted the death of Wir-dishan: never will I rest till I have contrived his death, and I myself rule over the Arabs, and then will I search out the Absians under every stone and every clod of earth. But the vizier Amroo continued his way with Shedad and Oorwah, till they approached the tribe of Abs, who, on seeing them, advanced towards the vizier and saluted him: he presented them the robes of honour, and the noble horses for King Zoheir, saying, King Numan salutes you, and demands your daughter Mootegeredeh in marriage, so that the two tribes may be only as one tribe: he desires you to demand as much as you please of cattle and he and she camels, &c. King Zoheir made no reply, but turned towards Antar; What is your opinion? said he. O King, he replied, the man has released my father and my friend, and has subdued my pride by his liberality. As to your daughter, she must marry some one, and she cannot find a nobler match than King Numan, for he is the Vicegerent of King Chosroe Nushirvan.

In conformity with Antar's opinion, King Zoheir

gave his daughter in marriage to King Numan, saying to the vizier, I accede to King Numan's wishes out of respect to Antar the victorious lion. The vizier, much delighted that Mootegeredeh's marriage was settled (and from that day love for Antar entered into his heart), returned to King Numan, and told him the whole affair was arranged to his satisfaction.

When the prisoners on both sides were restored, Antar sent for the chief, Hidjar, and having cut his hair off, released him. But when the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam and the Arab chiefs saw what Numan had done, they first complained of it to his brother Aswad, and then returned home. After this the tribe of Abs quitted the mountains with King Zoheir and Antar, and the chiefs, and all repaired to King Numan, who sprang up on his feet, and received them in the most distinguished manner, investing them with beautiful robes. Prince Aswad marked all this, And I, said he, I will connect myself to the tribe of Fazarah. So he demanded Hadifah's sister, for he was much attached to that tribe, and he acted towards them as his brother had acted towards the Absians; he clothed them in robes of honour, made them presents, and distributed gold and silver. They remained seven days in that spot, feasting and carousing; when Numan having made a hollow peace between the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, he ordered the march, recommending the speedy conclusion of the affair

with Zoheir's daughter ; and Prince Aswad having also enjoined the same to Hadifah. The tribes of Abs and Fazarah set out for their respective homes and deserts ; and King Numan also departed, and when he had reached the throne of his glory, he thought no more of the calamities of fortune. But the Persian troops that Antar had routed in the valley of Torrents, and whose chief, Wirdishan, he had slain, did not stop in their flight till they came to Chosroe, and related to him all that Antar had done to them ; how he had slain their chief, Wirdishan. We fled and sought protection, they added, in the tents of Numan, but he ordered us to be driven out, and we have heard that it was he who sent to Antar, and recommended him to lie in ambush for us in the valley of Torrents, and not a creature has ever given us any advice but Prince Aswad.

This account excited Chosroe's rage and indignation, and he swore he would absolutely put Antar to death and all the tribe of Abs, and that he would not leave a head or a tail of them. They were thus conversing, when despatches were brought in by Mubidan from Prince Aswad. Chosroe ordered them to be read ; and as soon as he had heard their contents, the light became dark in his eyes. He turned to the eldest of his sons, whose name was Khodawend, and ordered him to mount with a hundred and fifty thousand horsemen, Persians, Turkomans, and Dilemites : March, cried he,

to the land of Hirah; seize Numan and all the grandees of his government, and appoint his brother Aswad to the viceregency over the Arabs; and after that, he continued, march against the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Bring me all their men—all their property—all their women—that I may hang every one of them on the tower of the palace, and in front of them all shall be the slave called Antar. Khodawend expressed his submission, and immediately rose up and gave orders to the resolute knight, the undaunted warrior, named Zerkemal, the brother of Wirdishan, whom Antar had slain: but he, when the news of his brother's death arrived, cut off his hair and took refuge in the mansions of fire; and on this day Khodawend ordered him to select the horsemen for him, and in less than three days he chose out one hundred and fifty thousand horsemen, Persians and Dilemites, every one like a lion when he springs; and on the fourth day the standards of Khorasan and the imperial eagles waved over his head. Chosroe came out to bid him farewell: and having given instructions for his conduct, sent with him his chief minister Buzurjmihr. They continued their march till they came nigh unto Hirah. Numan went out to meet them; but at the sight of the troops he was confounded, and he was certain it was the army of resentment. He had no other resource but to dismount in the presence of Khodawend; and as he kissed the ground and did homage, Khodawend ordered him to be

seized, and also a number of warriors his relations. He appointed his brother in his place, and having encircled his brows with one of the imperial tiaras, he made him King over the Arabs, saying, Know that the just King has heard that you are a faithful adviser of the imperial government, so he has made you ruler over all the Arabs of the desert. Therefore, instantly address in writing all the tribes, both distant and near, and observe who obeys you, and who rebels against you. Those that submit I will favour; but as to those who rebel, I will march against them, and will tear their lives out of their bodies, and then we will proceed against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and will not leave a man alive among them.

Aswad was overjoyed, and exulted at the good news. He wrote letters to the Arab tribes, ordering them to appear at Hirah for the purpose of joining in the warlike expedition against the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Among those to whom he sent was Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian; and he said to him in his letter, If you wish to be revenged on the lion Antar—to arms! to arms! He moreover informed him of all that had happened to his brother Numan at the hands of Khodawend, the son of Chosroe. This letter he sent by one of his carriers, and then he applied himself to the execution of his duties towards Khodawend.

During all this time Maadi Kereb in his heart had endured what no man ever suffered before. All

the Arabs derided him, and praised Antar, and he made a secret vow in his own mind never to mount a horse, and never to appear in battle, till he should take vengeance of Antar, son of Shedad. Amongst the many others who came to him and reproached him, was one called Direed, son of Samah, and his relation Sebeea, son of Harith, surnamed Zoolkhimar. Direed had lived four hundred years, and he survived even to the coming of our Lord Moham-med, shaded in clouds, on whom be the greatest of blessings and most perfect happiness ! Old as Direed was, he was strong-limbed—fierce in battle—patient in difficulties, and on this account the Arabs called him Rihat-ool Harb (millstone of war). When he presented himself to Maadi Kereb with Zoolkhimar (lover of the veil tied round his sword-hilt), he assigned him a dwelling; he slaughtered camels for him and his comrades, and he ate and drank with him.

On the third day Direed being in high spirits with wine, and singing, he began to banter Maadi Kereb, jeering and taunting him in the grossest terms for having been taken prisoner by Antar, and he thus expressed himself in verses :

“ Those, whose protector you were, O Maadi,
“ are now disgraced ; their hopes are disappointed ;
“ their wives are covered with shame : for should
“ he not blush who has aimed at glory, and has
“ fought with a slave who has captured him ?
“ Abandon the scimitar, you cannot wield it ; talk

“ no more of the honours you once recorded : it is
“ not for every one who brandishes a sword in his
“ hand to enjoy a high reputation, or to inspire fear
“ in his attacks. There is not death in the barb of
“ the spear, but its employers must instruct it in
“ the plunder of souls. Die then of grief, or live in
“ disgrace and despair ! Watch no more the nights
“ you have watched. If you are still noble-minded
“ and high-spirited, march against the demon of
“ Hidjaz, and assault him. Fear not the warriors
“ when they come. Besides him, there is no one
“ against whom any precautions are necessary. If
“ you fear, demand succour of Sebeea, and you
“ will see a lion in war with blood-dyed talons, who,
“ when he draws his sword, its edge rends the
“ earth ; with it he bears down souls, and it de-
“ fends those that seek its aid.”

On hearing these verses, the heart of Maadi Kereb melted like lead, and he began excusing himself to Direed ; he told him what Antar had done to Hidjar, and spoke of the armies and the warriors he had destroyed ; how he had slain Ghasik and Wirdishan, and had surprised by night the troops of Numan. Zoolkhimar smiled ; O Maadi Kereb, said he, all this proceeds from your inability and your fears, and is the consequence of your alarms and your terrors. You console yourself with the fate of others. May God curse him who cannot reduce Antar to disgrace, or scatter his limbs over the barren waste ! By all that will succeed, or have

preceded him, O Maadi, you must unavoidably wash off this garment of disgrace and ignominy, otherwise your affairs cannot be retrieved, and you will be exposed to most galling difficulties; but if you wish, I will go with you, and you shall see how I will treat him, and how I will scatter his limbs over the hills and the plains.

Having remained five days with him, they returned to their own country; and soon after Maadi Kereb wrote to the chief Hidjar an account of all these circumstances, and they all swore they would root out the tribe of Abs and annihilate them.

About that time arrived letters from Prince Aswad; so they departed, revenge their sole object; and being greatly pleased at the captivity of King Numan, and the expedition of the Persians under Khodawend, they quitted their native land, and set out for the tribe of Abs and Adnan. But the first that commenced his journey was Hidjar, for he was resolved to be beforehand with the troops of Chosroe, so that he might acquire high glory to the exclusion of others. In the mean time the Absians, having thus connected themselves by marriage with King Numan, returned home; and as they consulted about the state of their affairs, they augmented their stock of he and she camels, and lived in security with their property and families. Now Antar had recovered from his wound; one day Oorwah came to him with some other noble horsemen, and said, O Aboolfawaris, arise and demand

Ibla in marriage, and let this trouble be removed from our hearts, for now there can be no opposition to your wedding. I will not do that, said Antar, and I will not wed my cousin till Numan weds Mootegeredeh, and when King Numan's happiness is complete, then consult about me as you please, so that the freeborn and the slaves may all rejoice. They were thus conversing and deliberating about such matters, unsuspecting of the circumstances that had happened to King Numan, when in a few days arrived a messenger from Amroo, Numan's minister, with a letter acquainting them with the circumstances, how the dominion of the Arabs had been conferred on Prince Aswad; how he had written to Chosroe, and had given him information unknown to his brother Numan; and how Khodawend had marched, and had seized Numan.

This news excited great consternation among the Absians, and as a confirmation of this intelligence, letters to the same effect reached the tribe of Fazarah, who were in transports of joy, and passed their time in feasting, and drinking evening and morning. Now that Aswad is our relation by marriage, observed Hadifah, he will certainly avenge us: now shall we extirpate every trace of the tribe of Abs and Adnan; now will we plunder and ravage their lands, and now will we slay them young and old. Rebia happened to be with them; O my cousins, said he, all are preparing for war; and whatever tribe comes first, do you join them. Oc-

cupy every road against the Absians; surprise them before the Persians can come up with you; and seize upon their lands and their pastures.

King Zoheir sent for his son Cais, and having assembled the whole tribe, Know, said he, that the Vizier Amroo has informed us that the son of Chosroe is marching against us with the forces of the world. Our departure from the mountains, said Antar, was not a wise measure. Our only resource is to retire to a spot where we may protect our women and families. Then will I encounter the Arab, the Persian, and the Turk, and the Dilemite, till I have exterminated them; and I will show you what I will do with this new upstart king; and soon will I commute the purity of his enjoyments into affliction. My advice, said Shiboob, is, that you depart for the mountains of Adja and Selma, for they are even more inaccessible and stronger than the mountains of Radm: and when you are there, no evil can affect you.

The Absians approved of Shiboob's advice, and as they were all unanimous for a removal—Tomorrow night we will depart, said King Zoheir. The next day the Absians struck their tents, and having raised the howdahs on the camels, they drove away the cattle; and they departed traversing the wastes and the sand-hills. But Antar ordered two of his slaves to proceed to the land of the tribe of Fazarah, and directed them not to quit their country till they perceived what new plans they were adopt-

ing. The slaves set out accordingly, and the Absians sought the mountains, where they pitched their tents, and soon familiarised themselves to that country.

The slaves soon reached the land of Fazarah, and they found the whole tribe shouting with joy, for on that day a letter had arrived by a messenger from Prince Aswad, informing them of the march of Khodawend, and the armies of Persia; and now you may gratify your revenge against the Absians, he added.

As soon as they heard this intelligence, they sent to inquire news of the Absians; but finding they had already removed to the mountains of Adja and Selma, My idea, said Rebia (that mine of treachery, fraud, and deceit), to Hadifah, is that you should acquaint your relation Aswad with their flight; and let us join the very first that arrives here, and march against them.

They were thus deliberating, when lo! a dust arose and darkened the whole land, and there appeared the Chief Hidjar, and with him ten thousand of the tribe of Kendeh. The tribes of Fazarah and Zeead went out to meet them, and accommodated them with habitations, and treated them in the most distinguished manner. Hidjar questioned them about the Absians, and when they informed him of their flight to the mountains of Adja and Selma, he expressed his regrets at not meeting them in their own country. Be not afflicted, O Chief

Hidjar, said Rebia; we will march with you, and we will assist you in taking vengeance; for the Arab and the Persian are coming against them in every direction, and they cannot possibly escape death and destruction. We must now exert ourselves to extirpate every vestige of them, and to ravage their lands; and every tribe that comes to us we will join. O Rebia, said Hidjar, we want not the assistance of the tribes, for we have a party sufficiently strong; and soon will arrive Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, and with him Direed, son of Samah, the Djeshmean; and Zoolkhimar, the Himyarite, accompanied with intrepid armies.

Rebia and the tribe of Fazarah were rejoiced at this news, and the Chief Amarah rubbed his hands in the excess of his joy. O my brother, said he, now indeed this black bastard cannot escape; and I shall now obtain Ibla, and shall be made happy; for really she cannot suit any one but me; and her charms are only to be compared with mine. Rebia laughed at him; O Amarah, said he, my heart tells me Antar will put to the rout all these armies, and he will not even let the first fall back upon the last; for I know of Antar what no one but myself knows.

Now the slaves whom Antar had sent to the land of Fazarah, when they saw the Chief Hidjar and his companions, and heard all their discourse about the Absians, set out for the mountains to join Antar, to whom they communicated what had happened, and all the plans of the enemy.

Antar on hearing this intelligence instantly arose, his courage all on fire, and repaired to King Zoheir, and informed him of all he had heard of Hidjar and the tribe of Fazarah. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we must now indeed make peace with them: but what is your opinion? O King, said Antar, we will leave here one thousand horsemen, with your son Cais, to defend the women and families; we will march with the remainder, and will surprise the tribe of Fazarah and Hidjar, and will soon overthrow all their iniquitous projects. That would be well, said King Zoheir; and they immediately put themselves in readiness, and marched with three thousand men, leaving Cais, with one thousand, enjoining them to be on the alert, and on their guard.

Antar rode by the side of King Zoheir with Oorwah and his people, and his uncle Zakhmet Uljewad; and when they were at some distance from the mountains, Antar reflected on what had occurred to him, and thus expressed himself:

“ Our country is laid waste, and our lands de-
“ spoiled: our homes are ravaged, and our plains are
“ devastated. Let us halt, let us mourn for them;
“ for there is no friend in that quarter, and the
“ country is ruined. Fate has fallen upon our com-
“ panions, and they are dispersed as if they had
“ never alighted at their tents. In sportive merri-
“ ment they tucked up the garments of joy, and
“ their spears were spread along their tents. The
“ wand of happiness was waving over us, as if for-

"tune had been favourable, and our enemies thought
 "not of us. O Ibla, my heart is rent with anguish
 "on thy account: my patience is fled to the wastes.
 "Oh Hidjar! Hey, I will teach thee my station;
 "thou shalt not dare to fight me—disgraced as thou
 "art. Hast thou forgotten in the vale of Torrents
 "the deeds of my valour, and how I overthrew the
 "armies, undaunted as they were? I precipitated
 "them with the thrust, and I abandoned them and
 "their carcasses to be trampled on by the wild
 "beasts? Shall I not behold thee in anguish to-
 "morrow?—Ay; thou shalt not escape from me
 "to the arms of thy beloved. I will leave the brutes
 "of the desert to stamp over thee, and the eagles
 "and the ghouls shall mangle thee. I am Antar,
 "the most valiant of knights—ay, of them all; and
 "every warrior can prove my words. If you have
 "a milch-camel, milk her; for thou knowest not to
 "whom its young may belong."

When Antar had finished, they continued their
 march till they came within two parasangs of Faza-
 rah, when Shiboob directed them to dismount, whilst
 he himself set out for the land of Fazarah. Re-
 turning at midnight, he told his brother Antar and
 King Zoheir that the enemy had quitted their tents,
 and were assembled to the number of twenty-five
 thousand horsemen, under Hidjar, their guide and
 counsellor: and their plan, he continued, is to ex-
 tirpate you, and ravage your country; and by morn-
 ing they will meet you.

Antar selected one thousand Absian horsemen. Go, said he to his uncles and his father Shedad; go by night with King Zoheir, by this road to the right, and surprise the enemy. He also gave Shas a thousand men, and sent him by the left, he himself proceeding with the remainder by the direct road, till they all approached the hostile army, and perceived their multitudes that filled the whole desert. They were in perfect ease and security, and never calculated on the possibility of an attack from the Absians, till the shouts came upon them from all directions, and the herald of calamities cried out over the whole land. They started from their tents, and sprang on their horses' backs, many of them without arms. They scarcely knew with whom they were fighting, with whom they were engaging, or with whom they were talking. But in their fears of Antar, they all drew their swords, and fell upon one another, and soon also laboured the swords of the Absians upon their shoulders.

When the Chief Hidjar heard the voice of Antar, he knew him, and cried out to the Kendehans, O my cousins, stand firm against this bold black slave, for he has only a small body of men with him; and he thinks he will serve us in the same manner he did in the valley of Torrents. But I am aware, that the battle turns one day for you, and one day against you: you have only to resist steadily this black slave, that we may put him to death, and our name be for ever renowned. The dust in the mean

time increased, and the horses trampled over the bodies. It was a night to them abounding in sorrows and tumults.

The three parties of Absians cried out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! they drove frightful thrusts till the horses were unable to charge from fatigue, and dawn was nearly rising on the tribes. But Antar did not discontinue the contest, assisted by the Absians, till morning dawned. Great part of the Fazarah army fled and retired, horror-struck at the blows of the lion-warrior Antar. Still Hadifah and Rebia remained with a few Kendehans, who stood firm, encouraged by their Chief Hidjar. Above three thousand of the tribes of Fazarah and Kendeh were already slain, and only thirty horsemen of the tribe of Abs.

By daybreak the two armies having separated from each other, and the troops having alighted, Hidjar advanced in front of his people, and exclaimed, I must defy Antar to the contest, or shame, disgrace, and infamy will overwhelm me. He waited till the meridian heat was abated, when he mounted his horse, and stood forth between the two armies, and every eye was directed towards him as he thus expressed himself:

“It is only the thrust with the spear that can
“relieve my affliction, and the blow of the scimitar
“on the chest, and the skull. When the mind can
“submit to infamy, words are only words without
“deeds. Fortune consists of two days; this is the

“colloquintida of sorrow ; the next its food is sweeter
“than honey. You dastard, you have clothed me
“in shame ; but had you done me justice, you
“would have trembled before me, and have pro-
“strated yourself in disgrace. To-day your chiefs
“shall bear witness to my superiority, when I make
“you drink of the cups of extinction. You made
“me captive in the dark confusion of night, in the
“valley of Torrents, by fraud and deceit. Come
“forth—let alone nocturnal stratagems—give me
“fair play. Now I am on the alert, I will be a lion
“without his equal—ay ! a lion, a deluge, a sea,
“to whose shore there are no bounds ; and mine is
“a youthful heart hewn out of a mountain.”

When the Chief Hidjar had finished, he sought the combat. O King, said Antar, as he stood by the side of King Zoheir, verily I must settle this affair with Hidjar ; for without his death, his army will never be routed. And he started out against Hidjar, his head uncovered, and on his body only his ordinary garments. He had thrown aside his armour, and his polished corslet, in contempt of Hidjar. He called out, Eh ! thou hast abused me for treachery and stratagem ; truly such is the natural disposition of thyself, and thine own tribe ; for thou didst come against us with the Arab and the Persian. It was only the judgment-sword of heaven that overtook thee in that plain and waste ; and now thou art come against me with the tribe of Fazarah, and hast assembled against me a countless

host; but I have surprised thee, that I may extirpate thee root and branch; then will I return to engage the rest, numerous as is the host that seeks us, and though our party is but small. Thou art clothed in armour, and I am in these simple clothes; my head uncovered, and bare my feet. And thus he continued—

“Verily, thou hast falsely accused me of deceit
“and of treachery in word and deed. Thou art
“now on the alert; meet me; thou shalt see a war-
“rior firm and resolute, fearless of peril. I am he
“before whom the lion of the den humbles himself,
“in fear of whom Chosroe himself trembles. I showed
“thee in the valley of Torrents what my sword
“could execute on the chests and the skulls. Wir-
“dishan was there; and the sons of horsemen fol-
“lowed him like a deluging rain. The horses
“quaked under their saddles, and they drank of
“death from the velocity of my spear. And thou
“shalt be driven into disgrace and calamity without
“a friend to aid either in word or deed.”

CHAPTER XXII.

ANTAR, having finished, shouted at the Chief Hidjar and rushed upon him; Hidjar met him, and these two obstinate heroes began the combat and the contest; the thrust, the blow, the give and take, now in sport, now in earnest; the approach and retreat, till the warriors were amazed at their manœuvres. Fatigue at length fell on the arms of Hidjar, for he saw that Antar was an irresistible hero, and he repented of his expedition into that land. Antar, perceiving his situation, closed upon him till stirrup clashed against stirrup, and grasping him by the rings of his armour and his corslet, he yelled in his face, O by Abs, I will not be controlled; I am the lover of Ibla; I will not be restrained. He seized him in his hand as if he were a sparrow, and dashed him on the ground. Shiboob pounced upon him, and having bound fast his shoulders and his arms to his sides, drove him away to the tribe of Abs. And as he looked at Hidjar he saw he was in tears like a woman. Eh! O Hidjar, said he, what is it that thus distresses thee? God curse thy father and thy mother! What, wilt engage in hostilities, and now that thy turn of fortune has caught thee dost weep like a woman? O Shiboob, said he, my

tears flow not from my fear of death, or at the occurrence of misfortunes; but as I reflect on the revolutions of Fortune and rapid execution of her revenge, I weep. To no one is she constant: she never beautifies but she deforms, and she never causes a smile but she accompanies it with a tear. How is that, O Hidjar? said Shiboob. Know then, O Absian, he replied, I had demanded some time ago in marriage the daughter of the Lord of Houran, and on her account I had exposed my life to every difficulty and danger; but he would not affiancé me to her but through the intercession of King Numan, and just as I was about to be married, King Numan wrote to me ordering me to march against your brother Antar when he was in the mountains of Radm. So I went against him—but that is all over; and when Numan made peace with him he released me, having first cut off my hair. I returned to my family, and asked my uncle to perform the marriage ceremony, but he said to me, Antar has taken you a prisoner, and I will never marry you to my daughter till you take vengeance on Antar. About that time came the news of the seizure of King Numan, and a letter from Prince Aswad ordering me again on a hostile expedition against your brother Antar. I set out against him in the full expectation of accomplishing my vengeance; but I have fallen a second time into his hands, and shame is increased on shame.

Well! O Chief Hidjar, said Shiboob, will you, in-

stead of serving Aswad, go with my brother and aid him in releasing King Numan? Then will your business succeed to your wishes, and you will be raised to the highest dignities, for truly King Numan has been ill requited, and he has fallen into captivity and disgrace. Now, O Shiboob, said Hidjar, I do intreat you to intercede for me this once with your brother, and preserve me from his grasp, then will I, by the faith of an Arab, submit to him, both myself, and my people, and my tribe, even until death; and if after this I ever betray him, may the mother of Hidjar be no more a freeborn woman! O Hidjar, replied Shiboob, I will engage for you, and I will ensure you my brother's protection. But I require of you to swear to me by Him who rendered the lofty mountains immovable; the Giver of life and death; that you will never betray us either in word or deed. And Hidjar took the oath required by Shiboob, an oath very binding among the Arabs at that period; and it is said that if a man ever swore that oath, and afterwards perjured himself, the evening would not shine on him before he would bark like a dog, and the flesh would drop off his bones, and he would die.

Now Shiboob having bound Hidjar by this oath, set him at liberty; he restored to him his arms and armour, and produced his horse. Hidjar mounted, and returned to the scene of contention.

As soon as the Kendehans saw their chief at liberty, they rushed upon Antar from all sides and

directions, and the Absians also attacked ; men met men, and heroes heroes. At that moment King Zoheir beheld Hidjar, and supposing he had escaped by force from Shiboob, he called out to his attendants to seize Hidjar, and drag him back into captivity and disgrace. But Hidjar dismounted from his horse, and running towards King Zoheir, he kissed his feet in the stirrup, relating to him all that had passed with Shiboob, and saying, Wait, O king, I will show you what I will do ; and Hidjar again mounted, crying out in a loud voice, My cousins, hold back your hands from the blow of the sword, for I have sworn to the Absians to be one of Antar's friends for ever, in order to release King Numan. The tribe of Kendeh no sooner heard the voice of their chief than they withdrew from the contest, and were rejoiced at their deliverance from the presence of Antar. They turned upon the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, destroying them with the sword, and the thrust of the tall spear. As to Antar, he was hewing down the heroes with his falchion, and revolving in his mind Hidjar's treachery, when he saw him perform these acts, and as he perceived his party annihilating the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, he was delighted at this alliance with the chief, who no sooner beheld him than he dismounted, and attempted to kiss Antar's feet in the stirrup, saying, O Aboolfawaris, let the blood shed between us be forgiven ! God knows all hearts, and may he curse the father of Hidjar if after this he assists the

foe against you, or ever again harbours evil against you ! Antar thanked him for his kindness, and having vowed eternal friendship, they assaulted the remainder of the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah, and pierced them as they fled with their long spears, and cut them down with their sharp swords ; and they did not stop driving them away till they had forced them back on their tents, when they returned to the scattered horses and dispersed arms, and set out on their way back to Aja and Selma, Hidjar riding by the side of Antar, and rejoicing in his society.

But the chiefs of Fazarah, with Rebia, were remaining quietly before their tents expecting Hidjar would return to them with Antar as a prisoner, when lo ! their companions arrived, routed and in flight ; they shuddered. Rebia was in great consternation. Alas ! said he, sons of my uncle, what has befallen ye ? What has happened ? And they related the whole : that Antar had taken Hidjar prisoner, and that he had become one of his companions. Rebia was horror-struck ; he shuddered and fled, fearful of death and extinction. But as to Amarah, he flung his spear away out of his left hand, and went off at a full gallop, looking behind, terrified at Antar, exclaiming as he went, O that I had indeed kept myself clear of this party !

As to Antar, when he returned from the pursuit his heart was at ease with respect to the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, for he had obtained of them all he wished and desired. He set out on his return to

the mountains, and as he meditated on the horrors he had endured, he thus expressed himself:

“ Ah! O Ibla, keep thy engagement; the past
“ is past; it is enough to be kept apart from thee!
“ Youth is not faded, and we are not yet become
“ old. Fortune has not vanquished our youth;
“ our sharp scimitars have not failed; our iron
“ fingers can still wield them! Ask the Fazareans
“ of us when we assuaged our hearts among their
“ warriors. We let alone their women, but they
“ were disordered; and before dawn they were
“ tearing their cheeks with their hands. We have
“ filled their country with alarm, and the two tribes
“ are become our slaves. We have mounted above
“ the Pleiades in their sublimity, and our valour
“ cannot be increased; and when our babes are
“ weaned as infants, our enemies shall bow down to
“ them in subjection. He who would attempt to
“ oppress us shall see in us the obstinacy of lions;
“ we will surround them with the thrusts of the
“ lengthened spear when battle rages in our hearts.
“ We will kindle our flames in every contest till
“ their bones and their flesh shall melt. We will
“ shoe our horses in every land with their en-
“ sanguined bones and their dried skins. Our mill-
“ stones shall grind down the tribes. We have
“ left their cultivated lands a barren waste. But on
“ the day of generosity we have given away all we
“ possessed, and have filled the country with our
“ liberality and kindness. Who is there to give in-

“ formation of us to Numan that soon his deliver-
“ ance will arrive? Behold the Persians have re-
“ turned discomfited; they have fled with subverted
“ standards; the spear’s barb laboured in their rear,
“ and they float in blood like the human hearts.
“ They shall exalt him as their king, and Chosroe
“ shall fall; he shall endure what Themood suf-
“ fered. I am the slave that encounters deaths; in
“ truth, the knight of the noble steeds. In my am-
“ bition I will exalt myself to the Pleiades by my
“ never-failing fortune and illustrious deeds. I am
“ Antar, and my name shall for ages be celebrated
“ for sound policy. Mine is a happy star from
“ God, who created all mankind his slaves.”

As Antar stopped, King Zoheir and his brave companions, and the hardy Kendehans, expressed their delight; but the Chief Hidjar, quite amazed, looked in Antar’s face: O Aboolfawaris, said he, God has truly combined in you all intrepidity, liberality, and eloquence, and every noble quality, and has closed them upon the Arab and the Persian. And he who can recollect these verses will never require a companion at night or a friend by day. And these verses were called by the Arabs “convivial, social;” and they are among the chosen pieces of Antar, the lord of battle.

As to Maadi Kereb and the tribe of Zebeed, as soon as they heard of the departure of Khodawend and Aswad against Antar, and that King Numan was in durance, he summoned five thousand of his

tribe, and having written to the Chief Hidjar, ordering him to join him in the land of Abs, he himself hastened away to Direed and Sebeea, to demand their aid and assistance. And when Maadi Kereb alighted at Direed's, and had related all that had happened to King Numan, and the departure of Khodawend and Prince Aswad with the Persians and the Arabs against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, the light became dark in the eyes of Direed; and turning towards Maadi Kereb, If this system, said he, should really be persevered in against the Arabs, those filthy Persians will soon overpower us, and our women will be sold in the cities of Turcomania and Dilem. As to me, I will never encourage this conduct against the Arabs; for I will address the tribes in writing, and inform them so. I will not move hence till I hear what has passed among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and the account of King Zoheir's admittance of Antar to their connexion, for by the faith of an Arab, were not Antar among the Abisians, I would instantly proceed myself to assist them against the invasion of the Persians. But I am afraid of the upbraidings of the Arabs, that they will say, Direed, son of Samah, lord of the tribe of Howazin, entered the service of Antar, who was a slave and a shepherd. But as to you, Maadi Kereb, I cannot possibly march with you, now that the Persians have seized the person of King Numan. I will not violate the sanctity of the sacred shrine; for I know that Prince Aswad will not enjoy his

dominion long, and never will they prosper who submit to him; and moreover, between me and King Numan there is an engagement which I cannot falsify.

These words created great distress in Maadi Kereb's mind, and his resolution wavered. But in three days he departed, and having assembled ten thousand horsemen, he set out to attack the tribe of Abs and Antar; but in his way he passed through the territories of Hidjar, where he heard of his expedition against the Absians, and that he had been joined by the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead; and we have learnt, they added, that the tribe of Abs has fled to the mountains of Adjà and Selma; for as soon as they understood the Chief Hidjar had marched against them, Antar and King Zoheir set out with two thousand horsemen, with the design to surprise the tribe of Fazarah and the Chief Hidjar; therefore in the mountains there only remains Prince Cais with one thousand warriors to protect the women. This intelligence delighted Maadi Kereb. Oh! exquisite! he cried; and turning to his companions, he added, Truly all I wished and expected has succeeded: and he congratulated them on the plunder and the accomplishment of their desires; and they instantly departed, traversing the plains and the wastes till they came near the mountains.

Prince Cais had stationed scouts on the summits of the heights and defiles, and as soon as they saw

the dust, they immediately gave him notice; and he ordered all the warriors to mount—they obeyed; and with Cais at their head, they hurried to the mouth of the pass like lions in a den, where, perceiving the desert waving like the sea with troops and armies, Prince Cais despatched an Absian horseman to inquire the news. He spurred on his horse till he came among them, and cried out in a loud voice, Tell me, O Arabs, who ye are before the battle rage between us. O Absian, said Maadi Kereb, advancing, ye are of little shame that have admitted to your connexion the offspring of a slave-woman. Verily your destruction is at hand, the Arab and the Persian are in quest of you, and my advice is that ye surrender yourselves to me without fighting. But as to your question about our rank, we are the tribe of Zebeed, and I am Maadi Kereb. I have stirred up against you all who have blood or vengeance to demand of ye.

The Absian on hearing this returned to Cais, and reported the circumstance. Rage was kindled in the countenance of Cais; he thundered from the mountains, and behind him followed the noble Absians whose intrepidity was proverbial. They shouted so that the mountains were in convulsion, the universe was agitated at their roars, and the face of day was blackened. The blasts of death were blowing with tempestuous gusts—the army of Maadi Kereb rushed upon the Absians—men met men, and heroes heroes. Blood streamed and

flowed—limbs were hewn off—horrors increased. Maadi Kereb penetrated through the Absians, for he was one of the thousand tyrants of that age of ignorance; he dashed down heads under his feet, he cut off wrists and fingers, and performed deeds that confounded the reason. The Absians were engaged in a sacred war, and they preferred death to flight, and would not live objects of shame among the Arabs. For in those days the Absians were the firebrands of war in bravery and undaunted spirit; they dreaded ignominy. The day seemed closed upon them, and the land was obscured in their eyes. They continued the engagement till the day fled, and darkness came on with thick obscurity, when they returned to the mountains, and Maadi Kereb halted at the entrance.

Cais assembled the Chiefs; Cousins, said he, my advice is that we continue the fight till my father and Antar return. They approved, and kept on the defensive till daylight appearing and the stars vanishing, the enemy arose up against them. Maadi Kereb advanced in front, and wishing to exhibit his courage, Hola! tribe of Abs! he cried, where is your black slave, whose aid you seek, and of whose force ye boast? Let him stand forth this day, and protect the women, and by the truth of Him who orders the rain to fall, and the desert to be clothed in green, I will leave for myself and ye too a tale to be recorded, and an example to be cited for ages. And he twisted and tossed about his spear in a style to

amaze the stoutest heart. But Cais observing Maadi Kereb's excessive vanity, Desist from the fight, he said to the Absians, whilst I go forth against this coxcomb, that prides himself above his fellows. And he urged on his horse till he stood before Maadi Kereb; How long this presumption? he shouted out, for thou art the very person our champion took prisoner: he reduced thee to disgrace, and was so kind as to set thee at liberty, having first cut off thy hair; he treated thee nobly, but his generosity was thrown away on thee, and thou hast acted like a low-born coward. Were Antar here, he would fight thee, and would tear out thy life from between thy sides; and though he is absent to-day, he will not be long absent; to-morrow he will come, and thou shalt see the calamities he will bring upon thee, and how he will punish thee, for truly thou hast sinned against courtesy; that is, if thou escapest safe from my presence, and thou bearest no marks of my spear. Cais thus continued in verse:

“ Had you any generosity, O Maadi, you would
“ not have come with horses and horsemen to attack
“ us. Our Knight took you prisoner; he pardoned
“ you, and thought you sincere, ingrate as you
“ are. You are returned; all kindness was thrown
“ away on you, for when a dastard is trusted, he
“ becomes a traitor. We are Princes, and you per-
“ ceive the rest of the world in the blow of the sword
“ are comparatively but slaves. God has favoured
“ the Absians, and has ennobled them with the

“honours of crowns and tiaras: had he granted us
“the power, the land should flow with beneficence,
“so that Noah would imagine he had given us the
“flood. Even Chosroe lives in fears at our great-
“ness; he dreads us, and the princes of the earth
“tremble at us.”

When Cais had finished his verses, Maadi Kereb vociferated at him, and attacked him. Cais received him as the parched up earth the first of the rain. The contest raged between them in the thrust and the blow; horrors and dreadful acts took place between them. But Cais was no match for Maadi Kereb in skill and prowess, and when the Absians saw the situation of their Prince, they resolved on making the assault, and by their aid to deliver him from his foe, when lo! the Zebeed warriors attacked at once, and endeavoured to finish the affair, and accomplish their hopes, and plunder the property; but the Absian heroes also assailed, and they were in one promiscuous confusion on the plain of battle: the penetrating spear was at work, and also the Indian blades. Calamity was thus removed from Cais, for he was near his destruction and death. He escaped from his antagonist, but not by flight. Maadi Kereb had wounded Cais in two places; but when the armies rushed upon one another, Maadi Kereb's attention was called off from him, and he routed the warriors till he drove them back to their mountains, having slain upwards of two hundred men. Still the Absians stood firm at the entrance; the

two armies continued to fight and smite till evening came on, when Maadi Kereb returning with his associates, reproached them for having made the attack. They alighted, and reposed till morning: Come on, cried Maadi, come on; plunder the Absians, before any Arabs arrive to prevent you.

At the word the horsemen mounted, and prepared for the battle of swords and spears; and as soon as day dawned on the Absians, there burst upon them the united cries of women and children: they unsheathed their swords, they shook their spears, and resigned themselves to death.

When Maadi Kereb observed the conduct of the Absians, he dismounted, and his warriors did so likewise. The Absians too followed their example, and every hope, every expectation was extinct. Grief fell upon the brave; the dust rose, and clouded over them; the party became quite a proverb; and they continued in this state till evening.

But Antar and Hidjar returned to the mountains. Antar was overjoyed in the society of Hidjar, and when they approached, O Aboolfawaris, said Hidjar, it occurs to me that I ought to precede you, because I had engaged myself with Maadi Kereb, to make a joint attack on your country with him, and Direed, and Zoolkhimar. I fear, he may have taken his road by the mountains: now I think, it would be advisable to send on Shiboob to see what is going on, and let him return quick.

Antar immediately ordered Shiboob to advance

towards the mountains, which he instantly did: he gave his feet to the winds, and sought the wide desert till he reached the mountains, where he heard the cries of the Absians, and Maadi Kereb shouting to his people, "to-morrow, ye shall plunder the enemy!" As soon as Shiboob had recognised Maadi Kereb, he hastened back to his brother. Know, son of my mother, he cried, Hidjar was correct in his supposition—our friends are reduced to extremities, and there only now remains to drag them out from between the mountains. Eh! Ebe-reak! said Antar, who has done this? Maadi Kereb, he replied, and with a world like the sands: and when I approached the mountains, I saw Maadi Kereb going his rounds, promising his people the pillage of all the property of the tribe of Abs! At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Antar. O, by the Arabs, he cried, it is absolutely my bounden duty to make an example of that Maadi Kereb, and those Zebeedians, for those who will benefit by the warning.

He was about to put his horse on a full gallop, but the Chief Hidjar prevented him. Whither art thou going, O Aboolfawaris? he cried. To fight with Maadi Kereb, said Antar. I request of you, O Aboolfawaris, said Hidjar, by the life of Ibla's two eyes, that you will let me only march against him. I will requite him for his deeds; I will frighten him with your strength, and the greatness of your power. If you approve of this, it will be

the best plan, and I will bring him to you a prisoner. Do as you please, said Antar.

Upon that, the Chief Hidjar set out with his noble Kendehans, and he travelled from midnight till the dawn of day, when he reached the mountains, and perceived the engagement. Woes of battle be on you, O Maadi, exclaimed Hidjar; misery to you, and to yours, henceforward. Could Antar come and behold the state of his cousins, he would not leave a Zebeedian alive: and he galloped down from the end of the desert, and the tribe of Kendeh followed eagerly, seeking the scene of contest.

When Maadi Kereb saw the armies advance, he thought they were of the tribe of Abs. He called out to his nearest attendants, and rushed towards the approaching forces; and behold! he saw the Chief Hidjar. No harm to ye! he exclaimed; for this is the Chief Hidjar, and I have been expecting him, that we may totally exterminate the tribe of Abs. He urged on his horse, and his heart was filled with joy. Welcome, I greet thee, my dearest brother, my truest friend, he cried. By the faith of an Arab, thou art come exactly in time to take thy share of the plunder.

The Chief Hidjar smiled: Your design is frustrated, O Maadi, said he; truly, you imagine my extraction different from my father's and grandfather's, for liberality should not be lost on mankind; and he who is nobly born and connected, does not act like a base coward. How is this, said

Maadi Kereb, you are bound to me, O Hidjar, by an ancient covenant. Ay, said Hidjar, by the lord of Zemzem, and the sacred wall, if you listen to my advice ; otherwise, I must fight you with my sword and my spear. Maadi Kereb stared in amazement in Hidjar's face, for he knew not what had happened. But the Chief Hidjar related every circumstance about Antar, describing his liberality and courage, and how he had taken him prisoner, and delivered him over to Shiboob, and how he had set him at liberty on his taking the oath, and I assure you, continued he, O Maadi, were Antar to give me this day his camels, I would tend them ; and were even mountains to turn on me I would encounter them ; and if, O Maadi, you can submit yourself to what I have submitted, make a contract with me on this point, and be one of Antar's adherents, else, come on to the fight and the combat, and away with all dissimulation.

Maadi Kereb was in great consternation, and his rage blazed the more. Eh, then, O Hidjar, he cried ; hast thou entirely disgraced all thy race on account of Antar ? Away with such folly, said Hidjar, for I will not permit you to speak thus of Antar ; he is superior to all mankind, male and female, and in this age is Antar unequalled ; for, to engage a thousand horsemen, or ten thousand horsemen, or a single one, is all the same to him ; and his soul aspires to nothing but conquest over all the Arab warriors. I used to think myself the knight of the universe till I en-

gaged him ; but in him I perceived prodigies ; and as soon as he made me prisoner, Shiboob gave me protection, and assured me of security, and Antar set me at liberty, as if I had never entertained any evil intention against him. When I perceived this, my soul was subdued. I became one of his comrades. So, Maadi, think no more of assisting the Persians, but eagerly seize this opportunity, for I have left Antar behind ; King Zoheir and all the tribe of Abs are coming after me. He then told him that Antar had sent on Shiboob to observe what they were doing, and he returned, continued Hidjar, giving us an account of all you had done to his cousins. Antar wished to march against you, but I dissuaded him out of regard for you. So adopt this plan before death be at hand ; do not expose your life to dangers and perdition.

On hearing all this, Maadi Kereb recollected the words of Direed, and he knew this would be his advice : O Hidjar, said he, how can you soften the hearts of the Absians towards me, after all I have done just now ? That business, said Hidjar, will not tell against you, for I will be a mediator in this affair, and you will moreover be a strong support of this tribe, particularly when we have released King Numan, you and your party will seize the property of the Persians, and will hew off their heads, and you will become also a champion of the sacred shrine. Hidjar continued to urge Maadi Kereb on this subject, till he gained him over, and he con-

sented, and he swore by the oath by which the Arabs swore.

Maadi Kereb returned towards his tribe, and acquainted them with the event, and they were greatly delighted. But the auxiliary Arabs that were with him dispersed and sought their homes, fearful that Antar would put them to death. Thus the tribe of Kendeh joined the tribe of Zebeed.

Prince Cais and the Absians were in the greatest distress at the arrival of Hidjar, for they thought he would assist Maadi Kereb. Their shouts and screams increased, but Hidjar sent a horseman to inform them, and quiet their alarms, and by evening arrived the tribe of Abs with King Zoheir and Antar. The chief Hidjar met them with Maadi Kereb, and informed them of his adhesion. Maadi Kereb advanced and kissed Antar's and King Zoheir's hand, saying, O Aboolfawaris, all blood between us is forgiven, and the merciful God knows all hearts. O Arabs, said Antar, we have only acted thus out of our partiality for King Numan, and on account of the sacred shrine, for if the Persians possess themselves of it, they will root out every vestige of the Arabs from every region. All present agreed in the truth of this observation, and thanked him for his conduct. He clothed them all with honorary robes, and the tribes being mixed together, they entered the mountains, amounting to fifteen thousand warriors, proverbial for their prowess. They reposed that night, and in the

morning they slaughtered he and she camels, and made entertainments and feasts for seven days. On the eighth day came Jareer from the land of Hirah, and told his brother Antar about the armies of Arabia and Persia, describing to him the various tribes and nations that were assembled. Well, Jareer, said Antar, who are those who have submitted to Prince Aswad, and with how many thousand has he set out? O son of my mother, he replied, those who have submitted to Aswad are all those with whom there is blood and vengeance against you, and those who hate King Numan. But he did not form any regular plan till Rebia came to him with Hadifah and the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah, and those who accompanied them were in tears in the presence of Aswad, and demanded his immediate departure to extirpate every trace of ye, and to ravage your country. He assented, and swore that he would not leave an individual alive in your country, not even a fire-blower. Khodawend had determined on dividing his forces into two armies, one against you, and the second against Mecca. But when Rebia and the tribe of Fazarah arrived and acquainted him of Hidjar's having made peace with you, they advised the Prince to march his whole army against you at once; And let us take, said he, all the tribe of Abs prisoners in disgrace and misery. Khodawend approved of his proposal, and ordered the army to march. They have only left one thousand Persians in Hirah as a

guard over King Numan and the few horsemen who remain his friends. I did not quit them till the universe was in confusion with the glitter of arms, and swords, and corslets.

Antar shouted at Jareer, Eh! enough of your description of those greasy caldrons and Persians, he cried; by the faith of an Arab, I will disperse their armies; I will not even let the first join his nearest neighbour. And he proceeded to King Zoheir, and informed him of the news. War; war alone must be our object, said the King, we must defend our women and our families; but we do not know whether these who have associated with us will fight with us cordially, or whether they be false companions. O King, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, let us but exchange a single look, and should only ten horsemen of ours be killed, then will they seek each other's blood in revenge and slaughter.

Upon this they mounted, and quitting the tents, informed their allies of the advancing armies, and that two hundred thousand horsemen were marching against them. Great indeed would be the disgrace, said he to Hidjar, should we permit these Persians to trample down our land under the hoofs of their horses, and King Numan not regain his dominions. What is your determination, O Aboolfawaris? said the chiefs. My determination is to meet them, said he. But, said Prince Cais, Jareer has informed us, their armies are most

numerous, and Khodawend is on his way against us ; and when he quitted Hirah, there were only one thousand Persian horsemen left behind ; now it strikes me, that about one hundred of our horsemen, mounted on swift strong horses, should be detached ; let them march to Hirah, where they may put the Persians to the sword, and release King Numan ; thus shall we succeed in our views, for this army cannot reach us for some days, and should it arrive, we shall be able to cope with them till King Numan returns, when many of the tribes will join him. All present highly approved of this proposal. God be with you and your father, and may Lat and Uzza bless you ! cried they all. It will do, said Antar, I will myself undertake it with ten horsemen ! O my cousin, said King Zoheir, your departure from the Absians at this moment would be very unadvisable, particularly as Hirah is very distant, and we are but a small party. No one but myself, said Hidjar, shall go to King Numan. Antar thanked him : that will do, said he, you ought to go. Take Oorwah and his men with you. Hidjar assented, and made ready that very day with one hundred of his own tribe, and he also took Oorwah and his people, who being mounted on swift noble steeds, departed for the land of Hirah ; and when they were gone, Antar, accompanied with Maadi Kereb and two hundred horsemen, daily roamed away from the mountains, to ascertain what was going on. They continued thus for ten days ; but on

the eleventh day, behold a dust arose that closed up the whole region. There appeared five thousand horsemen, the advanced guard of the Persian army, with a knight called Shahmerd, and he was an irresistible tyrant, and an untractable devil. This, said Maadi Kereb to Antar, must be the advance of the Persians. My advice is, said Antar, that we make a dash at them, and so saying, he urged on his horse Abjer, and drew up his men. Maadi Kereb did so likewise. The Persian chief saw them advance, and he could not make them out; as he said to his people, I cannot imagine what this small party can mean, for if it is the advance of their forces, whence can they have heard of us? They must be coming to demand our protection. However, let one of ye go forward and inquire. The Persians still advanced to the number of one thousand. Maadi Kereb shouted to his hundred men, and wished to assault them. But, said Antar, no, my brother, be not off your guard, and do nothing that may prove disadvantageous. How is that? said Maadi Kereb. Ay, said Antar, for if you deign to meet a thousand Persians with a hundred Arabs, our reputation will be lost amongst those greasy kettles: let you and I attack this thousand with ten men alone, and destroy them in the desert; let us fill their hearts with terrors. I will attack them alone, said Maadi Kereb, and will disperse them with my arm and my wrist. Antar attacked the right, and Maadi Kereb the left, and they were

immersed in dust; they both roared out like lions; all eyes were fixed upon them. The right was driven in confusion upon the left. The Persian leader, observing the two knights attack the thousand, was amazed and startled; he instantly dismounted, and worshipped the sun in blasphemy and pride, saying, Let I and you laud the unity of God! Do you see, said he to his companions, these two knights of the sheep-drivers, engaging the thousand Persian horsemen? This is the stupidity of the Arabs, said his comrades; soon will you see their heads laid low.

He remained gazing for an hour, when lo! the Persians rushed out from beneath the dust, flying away, pursued by the roars of Antar and Maadi Kereb, like peals of thunder in a cloud; and they continued their flight till they stopped before their chief. Eh! how is it, he cried, that two horsemen of the shepherd Arabs have attacked a thousand knights of Persia, and have routed them as a wolf the sheep? He shouted to his five thousand, and they rushed upon Antar and Maadi Kereb, who received them as the parched up earth the first of the rain. Joined by the Absians and Zebeedians, Maadi Kereb exhibited in the contest such intrepidity, that Antar was greatly astonished; for he only looked on and encouraged the warriors. He was, however, on the watch for Shahmerd, whom he saw brandishing a mace in his hand as he invoked the fire. Antar shouted at him—he bel-

lowed at him—he made him quake, and terrified him—he drove his spear through his chest. The spear penetrated through him ten joints of a reed out at his back, and hurled him dead to the earth. But when the Persians saw their chief a corpse, they wheeled round in flight, and retired in haste, and escaped, whilst Antar and Maadi Kereb returned with their comrades to the scattered horses and dispersed arms, and property and baggage.

On their way back to the mountains, exulting in their success, Antar thanked Maadi Kereb for his part in the combat, saying, By the faith of an Arab, had we informed our friends, and waited for them here, never would we have quitted the field till we had made a more serious impression on the foe. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, our fighting before the mountains will be more judicious; (and Maadi Kereb was afraid that Antar would remain in that spot with only two hundred opposed to two hundred and fifty thousand warriors, all armed with spears). Antar assented; and he travelled on, thus expressing himself:

“ Stop at home, if thou art in sorrow about
“ its lands, then perhaps thine eyes may weep in
“ tears. Ask of the baggage-camels, when they de-
“ parted, and when they will return! Dwelling of
“ Ibla! She is far away from thee! She sighs, and
“ my eyes are in agony at her sorrows. O land of
“ Shoorebah! may the clouds moisten thee!—May
“ the pouring rain bedew thy soil!—May the

“spring clothe thy lands in robes of flowers!—
“May the country be perfumed with their fra-
“grance! How often have I embraced in thee the
“lovely virgin, whose companion was revived in
“the obscurity. The sun, when it rose in splendour,
“worshipped her charms, and her appearance il-
“luminated the darkness. Death, daughter of the
“noble-born! is like a garden, and my spear is its
“branches and its roots. To-morrow there shall
“pass from my hand to the Persians a cup more
“bitter than the poisons of medicines. I will make
“them taste of thrusts that shall disgrace their
“chiefs, and shall make unweaned infants turn
“grey. When the armies of Chosroe pour down
“upon me, thou shalt see what will become of their
“limbs. I will fight them till they, high and low,
“shall be exhausted, and shall complain of the hor-
“rors of the dust. I will leave their flesh for the
“ravenous lion, and their horses and their armour
“for my comrades. O Ibla! were Death a sub-
“stance, it should bend and bow down before me.”

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, Maadi Kereb was in amazement at his courage and his eloquence. May God never abandon your mouth, said he, and may no one ever harm you! And they continued seeking the mountains till night had darkened the land.

Now as they had been a long time absent, King Zoheir and the Absian chiefs mounted, and went in quest of them till they met them. And Antar

related to King Zoheir how they had treated the advance of the Persian army, and how they had routed them, and that he had slain Shahmerd. To rout the advance, said King Zoheir, is an indication of victory and conquest, and we ought to offer our thanksgiving to the God of Old, the Creator of mankind. They entered the mountains, and told the horsemen what had happened, and the Absians were delighted; they reposed that night till daybreak, when they rushed out, demanding the combat and the conflict, and lo! the Persian armies appeared, and their dust rose on high till the whole country was obscured. The wild beasts fled from their dens, and the standards appeared. To-day, said Antar to his associates, will the glories of warriors be conspicuous. He stationed over every troop a knight, whilst he superintended them all like a lion.

When the Persians advanced and saw the small numbers of the Absians (but they were like ferocious wild beasts), they poured down upon them like a deluging rain. The Absians received them with blows that stupefied hearts, and thrusts that blinded the vision. Antar stood apart from the scene of battle protecting his men; sometimes he rushed to the right, now to the left, and having overthrown the heroes, he retired to his post. And whenever he perceived his party hard pressed, he was ready to assist them. Maadi Kereb observing this, acted in the same manner. The battle con-

tinued thus till mid-day. Consternation fell upon the Persians, when, lo! Khodawend approached with the great body of the army, and seeing the conflict raging, he called out to Zerkemal to withdraw the army from the contest, saying, We will establish ourselves here, and despatch a messenger to the Absians, for they have always paid us great respect; and perhaps now they have repented of their conduct, they will probably return to their allegiance, and seize the person of that slave, the worthless Antar. Upon this Zerkemal called off the army from the Absians. And the Persians alighted in their tents, and the land and the desert were filled, and whilst they were reposing, Khodawend ordered a letter to be written to the tribe of Abs commanding them to submit; and let it be mentioned that in that case I will stand as mediator between them and my father, but if they resist I will not spare one of them either high or low. Accordingly the vizier wrote a letter to King Zoheir to the above effect, stating,—Khodawend is advised to destroy you, but he has had compassion on you; he has resolved on acknowledging you the supports of his government, and the abettors of its greatness. Feel therefore the value of this intention, and presume not to thwart the imperial government.

Having folded the letter, he gave it to a satrap, and ordered him to depart. He also honoured him with ensigns and standards, and gave him an escort of twenty Persian horsemen, with an interpreter

called Ocab, son of Terdjem. The tribe of Abs had alighted, and not one remained on horseback but Antar and Maadi Kereb, who on observing the satrap, Antar said to Maadi Kereb, O chief, verily there is a satrap advancing towards us, he probably wants us to surrender ourselves to him that he may take us and hang us on the balcony; I rather wish to begin with them before they commence with us. They were in conversation, when lo! the satrap came up to them; he did not salute them, but asked for King Zoheir. He inquires for King Zoheir, said the interpreter, for he has a letter from Khodawend for him. We, O Arab, said Antar, have read your letter before its arrival; in it your prince orders us to surrender ourselves without fighting or contending. Pull that satrap off the back of his horse, said he to Shiboob; ay, and the rest too. Seize all their property; and if any one dares struggle with you, treat him thus—and at the word he expanded his arm, and pierced the satrap through the chest, forcing the spear out quivering through his back, and he hurled him down dead. When his comrades saw what Antar had done, they cried out for quarter, and surrendered themselves to Shiboob, who bound them fast by the shoulders. As to the interpreter, he shuddered. May God requite you well, said he, for you have answered us before even reading the letter. If this indeed is the honorary robe for a satrap, let it not be so for an interpreter; for I have children and a family, and

I am but a poor fellow. I only followed these Persians, but with the prospect of gaining some miserable trifle. I never calculated on being hung; and my children when I am gone will remain orphans. So he wept, and groaned, and complained, thus expressing himself:

“O knight of the horses of warriors that overthrow; their lion, resembling the roaring ocean.
“By your awful appearance you have disgraced heroes, and reduced them to despair. As soon as the Persian sees you he is dishonoured; if they approach you, and extend their spears against your glory, they must retreat, or there is no security. Have compassion then on your victim, a person of little worth, whose family will be in misery when he is gone. Not the thrust of the spear or battle are among my qualifications. I profess no fighting; I have no cleaving scimitar. My name is Ocab: but indeed I am no fighting man, and the sword in the palm of my hand only chases pelicans.”

Antar laughed at Ocab's verses. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, it would be foul indeed to hang this fellow. He has confessed his crime. Antar let him go. Return to your family, said he, and go no more to the Persian, or you will be in danger; for when they see you safe they will accuse you, and perhaps will put you to death. You are very right, my lord, said he: by the faith of an Arab, had I known these Persians would have been

thus worsted I would not have quitted you; and probably I might have managed to secure some of their goods, and have returned with it to my family. Sheikh, said Maadi Kereb, this business has failed: but, come, take the spoils of this satrap, and return to your family, and pass not your evening a dead man. Ay, my lord, said Ocab, he is a wise fellow who returns safe to his friends. So he ran up to the satrap, and despoiled him. Round his waist was a girdle and a sword, and when Ocab saw all that wealth he was bewildered; and having completely rifled him, O my lord, said he to Antar, I will never separate from you again. I wish you would present me to your king, that I may kiss his hand, and offer him my services: then indeed I will for ever cleave to your party, and whenever you slay a satrap I will plunder him. Antar laughed heartily: But, said Maadi Kereb, O Aboolfawaris, you have slain the satrap, and now King Zoheir cannot consult with him. O Maadi, said Antar, whenever any one comes to order us to surrender ourselves to him we will hang him, and not parley with him. Antar joined King Zoheir, and gave him the letter; he read it, and was much agitated. My lord, said Antar, what is the answer? Hanging and beheading must be the answer, said King Zoheir, so that Khodawend may send us no more of his satraps. I have done so, said Antar; and going out he saw that Shiboob had hung most of them; only three remained. He ordered him to

shave their beards, and cut off their ears, and sling the heads of those he had hung round their necks, and send them back to their prince. Shiboob did as his brother ordered: one of them died on the road; two arrived, and their clothes were of the cornelian dyes; and when they stood in the presence of Zerkemal they grunted and blasphemed, saying, the fault is Khodawend's, who condescends to negotiate with these Arabs. Zerkemal introduced them to the prince, and informed him what had passed. Khodawend, on hearing this, swore by the fire that they must bring before him every Arab fettered, with their hands bound round their necks, or he would put to death every Persian he had with him. He passed that night in great anxiety for the appearance of day; and soon the men shouted among the troops; the horsemen mounted; the two armies prepared; the dust arose and obscured the land; the trumpets resounded, and shouts were raised; the imperial standards advanced; the Arab horse pranced, and the tribe of Abs also were eager for the contest in defence of their women and families, but they did not move far from the entrance of the mountains. Antar attacked the Persian, and scattered away their skulls. He wished on that day to keep off the Persians from the assault, but the armies could not be controlled; they shouted in their jargons, and raised their voices; but Khodawend prevented his Arabs from attacking with the Persians. Prince Aswad came forth, and also Rebia

and Hadifah, and they stood just without the scene of battle, enjoying the spectacle of the contest between the Absians and Persians. The universe was in convulsions. The sun, with the violence of the dust, was veiled; the earth shook; lives were plundered; men were bewildered; swords clashed; the senses fled; blood flowed; the land was in tumults; the dust rose in clouds; the dead were trampled on with fury; the brave advanced, the cowards shrunk away. Antar and Maadi exhibited all their powers on that day. Khodawend was amazed. And they continued in that perilous confusion till the day fled, and the night came on in obscurity. The whole country was crammed with the dead. The armies of Khodawend alighted at their tents, whilst Antar and Maadi Kereb returned in front of their troops, resembling the flowers of the Judas tree, so smeared were they with the blood of the horsemen. They remained on guard till daylight, when the armies drew up for the battle and the contest. The Absians stood forth, and in front were Antar and Maadi Kereb like the lions of the waste. Khodawend commanded the Persians to make the attack against the Absians. Instantly the complexion of the beautiful changed; the cries were incessant; the gates of success were closed upon the Persians; the battle raged; shouts were vehement. The coward thought of his life, and screamed. Skulls were chopped off by the sword; the king of death was eager in the pursuit of souls; energy was

excited; all sport was at an end. The horses were drenched in perspiration; great was the agitation; heads were smote and were cleft in twain. The stumbling and slipping were universal; swords and shields were shattered; hands and necks were clipped off; spears dashed through the eyes; and the heart of Amarah burst.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THIS day is thus described :

“ A day alone in the revolutions of time to be re-
“ corded in the tales of the historian. Wars com-
“ menced, and every evil fell upon the Persian and
“ the Arab. The army of Persia came with their
“ horses, and the troops filled the whole country to
“ destroy the Arabs, and all the inhabitants of the
“ barren wastes. The Absians, and the armies
“ of the conquering Zebeedians, met them. The
“ horses of death rushed among them, and the
“ herald of fate vociferated aloud. Dust rose upon
“ every side ; and the brave heroes vanished from
“ the contest. The lightning of the scimitars flashed
“ like the stars in the obscurity of night. The blows
“ of the sword were heard like thunder roaring in
“ the rolling clouds. The thrust of the spear rent
“ open every bosom, and wrenched out the eyes.
“ The knights bellowed in the contest like the lions
“ of the deserts. They galloped over the plain,
“ and exhibited their enmity to their foes. The
“ youths of war raved in the battle—men, endued
“ with every martial quality. They rejoiced in
“ hearing the sounds issuing from the stringed in-
“ struments of the combatants. Brides seemed to

“stand among them, sparkling with every exquisite
“beauty: as their forms appeared brilliant before
“the combatants, heads flew off as offerings, and
“the men were hacked to pieces by the overwhelm-
“ing spear. The blades and lances played a tune,
“and the dancers moved to the clash of the edged
“sword. They were delighted in listening with ec-
“stasy. They danced, and could not be quiet. The
“cups of death passed round with wine of the liquor
“of perils: it intoxicated them, and carried them
“off speedily; and whilst they were singing they
“were dispersed. The falchions clashed, and again
“they returned to the destruction of dearly-prized
“lives. Where they fought, there fell the requisite
“punishments upon them for drinking the prohibited
“draught. He who could see them fell, or was
“trampled under the noble steeds. He who could
“see them threw himself dismounted on the ground,
“and there sought the plains and the deserts. Of
“one were the limbs hewn off; of another was
“pierced the heart with the thrust of the spear.
“They remained with their faces upon the earth,
“and they drank of the wine of perdition. The
“ravens made their complaints among them, as the
“owl mourns in its notes. The horses of death
“were eager among them, and the carcasses of the
“Persians were crushed under them. They were
“exhausted with the contest, and the horses of death
“galloped over them.”

Thus they continued to fight, and thus were they

annihilated in battle. The two armies continued the contest of blows and thrusts till the day closed, when they separated, the whole country being filled with the dead. But, on the return of dawn, they again started for the combat, and the hundreds and thousands being drawn up, and the ranks being arranged, Antar stood forth, and appeared on the back of Abjer, and he was like a strong tower, or a block of iron. King Zoheir, and his sons, and the other horsemen and troops followed him; his father Shedad, and the family of Carad, preceding him. The tribe of Ghiftan thundered behind, and then came all the warriors and knights. O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, numbers and an immense multitude oppose us! What say you? O King, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, I will verily show you this day a battle and a contest future ages shall record. I will exterminate the boldest of these heroes. And Antar began to encourage his heart with these verses:

“ I am the Absian, the slayer of cowards. In war
“ is the time of my glory. I remember my Ibla in
“ the hour of battle, and love of her inspires my
“ heart. I have assaulted the foe with the chest of
“ my charger in the day of battle, at the hour of
“ the concussion of multitudes. I have broken down
“ their tribes with the edge of my sword, and their
“ blood has flowed like pouring clouds. Never have
“ I turned away the chest of my steed from them.
“ My dependance is on Ibla, and my noble passion.

"I said to her, turn thee away, and depart, for the
"destruction of troops is my duty. When the
"movers of terror come down upon us, and the ar-
"mies assail in quest of death, and the troops of
"Arabia and Persia crowd round the great King,
"it is then my noble steed with its hoof of rock
"drives against them; and his rider is a youth of
"the race of Abs, whose father and mother are de-
"scended from Ham. The horse rush upon the
"stern intrepid warriors, the harbingers of terror,
"like male ostriches; in their hands are Indian
"blades and spears: then bursts forth a blaze of
"light, and it is the lightning flash in the thunder
"cloud. They press on, they present the dreadful
"combat; and then glows a flame like a burning
"fire. I have slain Wirdishan, and he was a stout
"warrior, bold in the encounter on the day of as-
"sault. I have left his women to mourn him in
"misery, and he is weltering in blood on the plain.
"This day too will I slay the son of Chosroe, and
"with him Aswad, thou son of a coward. I am
"Antar, and my reputation is known far and wide,
"as I tear open heads with the rage of my scimitar."

When Antar had finished his verses, he rushed upon the Persians, and roared; he assaulted, and with his shouts he made the deserts and the sand-hills rock, and the country trembled at the howl of the ferocious lion. That day Antar rushed upon the Persians, and as he vociferated, the mountains resounded, and hollows re-echoed. The horses

started back in confusion, and hurled their riders off their seats. In fact, the whole country was obscured; and the dust overshadowed the land: men burst down on one another; skulls were hewn off; bowels were wrenched out, spears were shivered, and swords were shattered. Blood deluged; lives were plundered; horsemen conversed in various tongues; darts were sped with rapidity. The noble-born were in their glory; the base retreated; the brave advanced: heads flew off; the dead were tossed about. On that day the very breathing was checked, and the scene exceeded all calculation. They continued to fight and to contend, to thrust and to smite, till God permitted the day to depart, and the night to throw around its veil of obscurity. Then the two armies separated, for they were exhausted with striking and piercing.

The tribe of Abs returned, and Antar at their head, like the flower of the Judas tree, from the blood of the horsemen that streamed down him. King Zoheir, and his sons, and the tribe of Abs in general, could utter no other word but the "Great Antar," and the victory and triumph were attributed to him.

The two armies reposed that night till morning dawned, when the Persians leaped on their horses' backs, and were drawn up in the left, and right, and centre, and flanks. The tribe of Abs also issued from the mountains, and the men hastened to their posts, when lo! Antar burst forth to the contest,

on his horse Abjer, like a savage lion, or a wave of the sea in a tempest. He rushed against the right of the Persians, and overwhelmed it with disgrace and infamy, and again he returned to the plain, when lo ! a knight of Dilem came down upon him like a roaring lion ; but Antar only said, accursed be your mother and the mothers of all who worship fire ! and he struck him on the jugular vein, and separated his head from his shoulders. Again he galloped and charged, demanding an antagonist : a second stood forth, he slew him—a third, he hurled him over—a fourth, he soon despatched—and they continued in this state till the sun being about to set, he turned away from the field of battle, after he had slain about two hundred and fifty horsemen, and taken seventy prisoners : and as he exulted in what he had done, he thus expressed himself :

“ When I wish, I steep my lance in the dye of
 “ vermilion ; and I overthrow the vehement horse-
 “ men with my spear. I am the son of the noblest
 “ of men to the east or to the west ; by my strength
 “ I conquer in battle, and in the attack. I am the
 “ knight of war that never flinches. I hew off the
 “ heads of the armed men, and am filled with glory.
 “ I am a knight whose equal the age will not behold,
 “ unrivalled for my feats, my conquests, and my
 “ liberality. I am the wished-for knight, the shouter,
 “ the vociferator ; I am the piercer of the brave in
 “ the day of assault. I am the object of horrors in
 “ every fight : I am the grasper of souls, the dis-

“ solver of every enchantment. I am the destroyer
“ of heroes in every dust ; I am he that makes the
“ warriors drink of the poison of serpents : I am
“ the knight of knights, my ambition soars on high,
“ and it is elevated to the sun of Paradise. O Ibla,
“ I am the furious horseman, the vanquisher of the
“ powerful, the stern and the intrepid. I swear
“ by the procession, by the pillar, by the stone, by
“ the temples, and by their supports, and Zemzem,
“ that I will raise the war in the field of contention,
“ and that I will annihilate heroes, piercing them
“ with my tall spear. I will raise the glory of Abs
“ above all mankind, by my generosity, by my am-
“ bition, and my resolution. When the warriors
“ cry out in the battle, who is there ? I cry out, I !
“ and death is hurled against death. Should the
“ circumference of the world assemble against them,
“ I would meet it on that day, as if the earth were
“ but the circumference of a dirhem. Truly, in the
“ battle of bitterness there is a lion of the tribe, and
“ when I am engaged, the valour of the most for-
“ ward is conspicuous. I am the lion, but I am not to
“ be trifled with ; I am the sea, but I am not to be
“ tasted. I am he who encounters deaths laughing,
“ whilst my foe meets me with not even a smile.
“ Not every one whom a steed ennobles is a knight ;
“ not every polished two-edged instrument is a
“ scimitar. Rise, my Ibla, and behold thy Antar
“ this day—the lion, when all the armed multi-
“ tudes rush upon him. O Khodawend, return,

“expose not your life to dangers with the champion
“of women, or you will repent. I am Antar the
“Absian, the knight of his clan; I destroy in my
“assault the pillars of the tribes.”

At hearing these verses, the Absians with one acclaim cried out, May God never split your mouth, and may there be never one to harm you! Antar thanked them, and dismounted. They entered the tents, and remained on the watch till next day, when the warriors again mounted. The men were drawn up, and as Khodawend, mounted on his most valuable steed, stood observing the Absians, lo! Antar started forth between the two armies, exclaiming, Where is the combatant? Who is the champion? This day is the day of universal agitation; this is the day for the elevation of funerals! Will no one dare to meet me? Ye caldrons of cowardly Persians! Be not afraid; come forth—one knight to one knight—ten to one—hundred to one—thousand to one: and if you think it but little odds, come all of ye, attack me, that I may encounter ye all with a staff with which I used to tend the he and she camels; and I will disperse ye among the wastes and the sand-hills.

When the Persian army and Khodawend heard Antar's harangue, amazement and terror fell upon them. This, said Khodawend, is the grossest indignity: when lo! one of the priests of fire advanced towards Khodawend, and kissing his hand, O Prince, said he, do not despise this hero, whose intrepidity

is quite proverbial. Take my advice, and rush upon him with all your armies, Persian and Arab, or this swarthy knight will exterminate us all.

Upon this, Khodawend ordered the whole army to attack, and they, after the manner of their forefathers, made the assault as if one man, Arab and Persian, Turcoman and Dilemite. But Antar met them with blows irresistible and infallible, like a voracious lion, when he roars and bellows.

When King Zoheir saw the attack of the armies, and how they surrounded Antar on all sides, he ordered the tribes of Abs, and Kendeh, and Zebeed, to the assault. They altogether made a rush at the Persians, and the ocean of death waved and dashed till the hair on the head and the locks below the ears turned grey. The valiant heroes fought, the cowards were in dismay and fled; beards were dyed with crimson blood; lords became slaves; and there passed among them what no pen can describe. The supports of life snapped, and were thrown down: the day darkened over them, and blinded them; the heroes roared and bellowed; wrists and heads were hewn off.

Khodawend beheld in the tribe of Abs and its swarthy horsemen a fury of battle he had never observed neither in Arab or Persian. The conflict continued to rage, blood to be spilt—the flame of war to sparkle, and men to slay, till night coming on, the armies separated, and the surface of the land was covered with the dead: for on that day above

ten thousand Persians were killed. Khodawend retired, surrounded by his warriors of Dilem. The tribe of Abs also returned with more than two thousand prisoners. Khodawend ordered his Satraps to take care of the Absian prisoners, amounting to about one thousand. Thus they reposed, anxious for the dawn of day. But Antar on quitting the battle was like the Judas flower; and as the tribe of Abs preceded him, he thus spoke:

“ O my Ibla, heed not the calamities of night,
“ and let not nocturnal disasters afflict thee. Fear
“ not death, for it is overpowered by the command
“ of him who ordains every act. By thy life, wert
“ thou to behold the foes that charge upon me, O
“ thou essence of loveliness, as they empty their
“ quivers, and rush on with every lion-hearted,
“ long-mustachioed warrior, as they rave whilst my
“ Abjer, in the midst of their hell-flames, outstrips
“ the winds in the season of the northern blasts;
“ and as they roll on in waves like the ocean around
“ me—and as they attack brandishing their spears,
“ then am I the undaunted lion. I fear them not—
“ I heed them not—and when thou seest the light-
“ ning of death flashing from the blade of my
“ polished scimitar, and cups of death circling
“ round from the barb of my well-proportioned
“ spear, Antar, under the shadow of the dust, will
“ cleave off the warriors' heads with his sword, and
“ when the pointed lances goad him, he will fight
“ on the right and on the left. I am the death

“ that overthrows mankind ! the rock-ribbed moun-
“ tains yield to my impetuosity. Let the Imperials
“ come with all their armies, broad-chinned, and
“ their mustachioes plucked out, we will charge
“ among them with our hard-flanked, high-
“ blooded steeds. We will encounter their fronts
“ with the thrust whose fall would level the towers
“ of mountains. I am Antar, in form like a lion,
“ and I dread not the utmost fury of my foes.”

As soon as Antar had finished, King Zoheir hastened towards him, and kissed him between the eyes, and thanked him, (for on that day he never expected to see him escape alive from the arrows of the Persians). He afterwards sought his sons, and perceived three of them were wounded, and Warcah's eye had been grazed. Warriors, said Antar, had they not fought with arrows, we would have exterminated their hosts, and we would have left them as a warning to all beholders. When they had secured their prisoners with cords, and brought them into the mountains, By the faith of an Arab, cried Antar, in revenge for Warcah, I will verily take Khodawend's life. To-morrow will I attack him under his banners and his standards, and I will either take him prisoner, or leave him abject and degraded. They retired to their tents and lighted their fires, and the two armies were on the watch.

Khodawend ordered the Satraps to examine the troops, and when it was ascertained that ten thousand had been slain, and two thousand made pri-

soners, his bosom was violently oppressed, and he was in the greatest consternation. The fire is enraged at you all, said he, and you have merited this disgrace. What! has this catastrophe befallen you, you so superior in numbers? By this calculation, had they even amounted to one-fourth of your force, they would not have left one of ye alive. By daylight, the two armies being drawn up in order of battle, a knight came forth from the Persian army like a fragment of a cloud, mounted on a close-haired charger: from his neck hung an Indian sabre, and a thin spear was slung over his shoulders, and he wore a defensive coat of mail, short-sleeved; and he came on in a most impetuous style, till he had reached the middle of the plain, when Maadi Kereb rushed down upon him, and not permitting him even to gallop or charge once, he smote him with his sword, and left him dead. A second started forth, he slew him—a third, he hurled him headlong—a fourth he crippled, and a fifth, he accelerated his departure from the world; and so on, till he had killed fifty horsemen, when the sun inclining to the westward, the two armies separated, and sought their tents, and the picquets protected the sleepers till the day dawned in smiles, and the two armies prepared to renew the fight and the conflict. The ranks were drawn up, and the thousands were disposed opposite each other. When lo! a horseman appeared on a bright roan horse, and sought the contest. Antar stood forth against him,

but Maadi Kereb anticipated him : this knight was the brother of Wirdishan, whom Antar had slain in the valley of Torrents. Ocab saw him, and he went up to Antar ; O my lord, said he, this is indeed a mighty Satrap ! Maadi Kereb attacked him ; they both assaulted and struck ; they retired, and they closed, and they continued the combat, till the day closing in, they were about to separate unhurt, after they had fought a battle that would have turned infants grey.

Zerkemal was full of rage in his heart, that he had not accomplished his wish against his foe ; and as Maadi Kereb was returning towards the Arab army, the Satrap remained quiet till he had turned his back upon him, when he proved his perfidy, for he shouted and hurled at him a penetrating javelin, convinced it would overthrow him. But Maadi Kereb, hearing his shout, quickly turned his shield over his back, and the javelin fell upon it more fatal than the fall of a thunderbolt ; it pierced right through to his body and wounded him. Maadi Kereb fainted and fell on the ground. The Satrap was in the act of dismounting, when lo ! a yell struck him like the crushing thunder : he turned behind him to meet the knight, and as he advanced he shouted at him ; but the other again roared so that he blinded him ; he poured down upon him, and frightened him, and pierced him. The spear stuck in his ribs, he fell to the earth weltering in his blood. This was the swarthy knight—the skilful

combatant—the roaring lion—the captain of knights—the chief Antar, son of Shedad. For when he saw Maadi Kereb thus betrayed, he resolved on punishing the Satrap for his deed. He hastened towards Maadi Kereb, and having extracted the javelin out of his back, he bound up his wound, and placed him on his horse, and gave him over to his companions. It was now dark, and Antar returned to the tents, his grief excessive on account of Maadi Kereb. But as to Khodawend, his rage and indignation increased to such a degree, his passion nearly choked him.

O Prince, said Aswad, this is not the plan by which the government will last long in your hands. The warriors of Hidjaz are at all times of very inferior numbers, but every one of their knights will overthrow a whole tribe; and if you do not permit us to attack them in all directions, we shall never gain our object. I will not attack them, said Khodawend, but with knight to knight, and if you cannot bring me them one after the other, I do not want any assistance of you. All this, said Rebia, proceeds from Antar's good luck, so that at last he will vanquish us.

They reposed till the dawn of day, when the horsemen started on their horses' backs; the chiefs advanced, and Antar stood forth on his horse Abjer like a resolute lion. Shiboob had told him all that had passed between Khodawend and Aswad; for he had insinuated himself among the Persian troops,

and having obtained intelligence, he returned to his brother. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, I will exterminate the tribe of Fazarah, and the armies of Persia, were they as numerous as the sands of the desert, and I will slay that cuckold Aswad and all his troops with the weight of my scimitar. I will restore Numan to his dominions—I will destroy all the inhabitants of Khorasan : And he hastened away to the plain, King Zoheir and his sons, and his father Shedad, and his uncles, following him, and also the tribe of Ghiftan galloped forwards : the tribe of Abs amounted to five thousand, and the tribe of Ghiftan to three thousand, and the whole of the army consisted of eight thousand, all sturdy lions. But Antar made his well known assault, and poured out his usual roar. The battle began to rage, and blood to be spilt, and men to be slain—and the flame of war to blaze—and the world to be obscured—and heroes to dash against each other—and skulls to be dispersed—and spears to be shivered—and swords to be shattered—and blood to stream in torrents—and lives to be plundered—and fires to burn—and horsemen to pierce—and the brave to be exalted in glory—and the base to retreat—and the Persians to be precipitated—and hands to fly off—and the dead to be kicked about—and the horses to charge in succession—and the enemy to be routed—and on that day the consternation was universal, and the battle put at nought all calculation—the combat was fu-

rious; calamities and misfortunes were innumerable; the easy became difficult. Antar pierced right and left, and filled the land and the sands with carcasses: he drove right through the army, and slew numbers of their heroes, and he never relaxed. King Zoheir also attacked with his sons, and they penetrated through the left. Antar's uncles triumphed on the right: thus they continued till night brought on darkness; and as Aswad retired, he took no notice of any one, for he was intent on horrors and vengeance, and so it was also with Khodawend, for he was quite stupefied at the fury of the contest, and he shuddered in terror. As soon as the armies alighted at the tents, they ate their dinner and reposed till day shone.

The first that stood forth in the plain was the knight of the swarthy Abs, and challenged to the combat; but as no one sallied out against him, he rushed upon the Persian right, and hacked among them with his scimitar; he raved, and he issued from the dust, having slain seventy brave horsemen. Again he returned to the conflict and carnage, and assailed the heroes with the thrust of his spear. Come forth, ye caldrons of Khorasan! he cried, aim your swords and your spears at me; and though the horsemen rushed upon him with the utmost impetuosity, he plundered them of their lives, and stretched their carcasses upon the ground; and he ceased not to thrust at them till they all shrunk back, when he rushed against the left,

where fought the Arab tribes. He dealt death and perdition among them, and slew them till the day closed, and he only quitted them after he had assuaged his soul among them; and Shiboob, like an unavoidable calamity, always preceded Antar, the springing lion; but they all returned from the field of battle towards the tents as night was coming on. The two armies reposed, keeping on the watch; but the day dawning, Antar came forth into the plain, and thus spoke:

“ Question the mountaineers of me, O Ibla ! ask
“ of them what the Persians have suffered from me.
“ I have destroyed the multitudes that came upon
“ me with billows of troops, men and demons.
“ They wished to devour us, hungry as they were;
“ but we have glutted them with blows and thrusts.
“ We have eaten, but they have not eaten ; for they
“ came against us seeking death at our hands. We
“ have dispersed their troops from the women more
“ beautiful than seraphs. How many horsemen
“ have I laid low with my sword, and their hands
“ were stained, but not with henna ! How many
“ warriors have I abandoned, whose wives must
“ mourn in tears their dissolution ! How many va-
“ liant heroes have beheld my thrust, and have
“ cried out, Hold, O son of Shedad ! My heart has
“ been created harder than iron. Mountains may
“ pass away, but I shall not pass away. I am the
“ strong bulwark for the race of Abs when their
“ enemies erect their fortresses. My complexion,

“it is true, resembles the night, but my deeds are
“more brilliant than the rays of the sun. Among
“the horsemen there is not my equal; how then can
“I fear man or demon? My dark complexion is my
“parentage; my father and my mother are my sword
“and my spear when my genealogy is required.”

When Antar had finished his verses, behold Aswad in front of the Arab army ready to attack him; and as they assaulted him, Go to King Zoheir, said Antar to Shiboob, with my compliments: demand of him one hundred horsemen, that with them I may cut down the enemy, and disperse them among the deserts; but let him not stir from the entrance of the valley. Shiboob departed to execute his orders, whilst Antar assaulted the armies: horsemen engaged horsemen; the equals in glory contended; the shouts were dreadful among them; spears laboured against hearts and lives; the blades of the swords clashed; slaughter and wounds were incalculable; exertion was roused, and all jest was at end; the cowards mourned for themselves, and wept; and the eyeballs of those in health sunk deep into their sockets; the brave cried out, Flinch not! Whilst they were in this tumult, behold from the quarter of the desert there appeared a dust, which filled the whole region; the armies stared at it with attentive gaze to discover what it might be: when, lo! it was Aboolfawaris Antar, and in his hand was a prisoner like a camel, and behind him was Shiboob the subtle lion. The horsemen all looked at the

prisoner on whom this infamy had fallen, and behold, it was Prince Aswad ; for he was the first that attacked in front of the Arabs, and rushed upon Antar with the view to make him drink of the cup of perdition, but Antar frustrated his intention by his impetuosity, and he assailed him, bearing his shield over his bosom. He hurled him on his back, but the Arabs rushed on, anxious to rescue him ; still Antar engaged them till Shiboob returning, he gave him over to him, and he drove him before him till he brought him clear beyond the scene of battle. Antar ordered Shiboob to bind down his arms, and drive him on to the mountains, whilst he himself returned to the havoc and the destruction of heroes.

Maadi Kereb had continued ill with the pain of his wound till this day. He now mounted his steed, and plunged into the dust, exciting his cousins to the contest, and to follow Antar, the son of Shedad.

As to Khodawend, his bosom was stifled, and he said to his satraps, Let not the Persians fight in company with the Arabs. The armies continued to advance and engage, and the sword and spear laboured among them till the day fled. Discomfiture fell on the Arabs, and they returned to their tents, pursued by the thrusts of Antar, for they were indeed annihilated, and their old and young were in amazement. The Absians and the Zebreedians retired, and they had filled the land and the desert with the dead. As Khodawend marked the

catastrophe that had befallen him, Now, indeed, said he, the imperial government is mangled. Now the Persian warriors are disgraced, and after this event I cannot blame Numan who connected himself by marriage with this tribe. O prince, said one of his satraps, attack them with your whole army, so that we may engage them with darts and arrows, and pen them up in the mountains, otherwise they will bring down infamy and disgrace upon us, were we to be assisted even by the whole force of Khorasan. Upon this he ordered his officers to instruct all the warriors on this point, and to direct them to exert their united powers in the battle. Having reposed, they prepared their arms and their weapons, till the morning appearing, they started for the contest and carnage. Khodawend mounted, and he gave a shout that made the deserts ring. They waved on to the right and left, and prostrating themselves before the sun at its rising over the summits of the mountains, they blasphemed the great Creator, and then advanced with their bows and arrows, and unsheathed their polished scimitars. The Absians arose that morning, exulting in their victory which Aboolfawaris Antar had gained for them; they were all ready to mount, and attack with their spears, but Antar prohibited them, saying, O my cousins, this day will not be like other days. Assemble and stand firm at the entrance of the defile, and beware of separation or dispersion, but bear with perseverance the moment of the

onset. Engage them fiercely this day, and be not as they imagine you are, though the Persians drive against your horses, and seek to destroy you. Just then the armies of horsemen rolled upon them like the billows of the ocean, and the commotion was terrific among them. The day became like a night of total darkness; the horsemen were mixed confusedly, singly, and in pairs; the arrows struck the jugular veins of the steeds. (Asmaee reports, I have heard from one of the Arab chiefs in whom confidence may be placed, that this day was such that no one before him or after him ever saw its like, for they fought till their bodies fell dead; the blast of death withered them; the heads of the slain were dispersed.) But Antar having selected one thousand horse, pursued the conflict, and encountered horrors, till he drove away the troops from the Abians, and scattered them among the wilds and the wastes. When he shouted they were dispersed far and wide; and when he attacked they were put to the rout; and thus he continued his dreadful deeds in front of that valiant army till consternation falling upon them all, he dismounted from the back of his horse, and rushed rapidly towards the Arabs with sword and shield. The tyrants of Persia shouted round him, and the whole atmosphere resounded. The scene bade defiance to the description of the most acute. The high-blooded chargers pranced over skulls and necks; the swift-spiced darts, and the thin-bladed scimitars and the quivering lances

penetrated through the tribes of Zebeed and Kendeh; and they endured intolerable horrors in the combat with the Persians. They tasted the bitterest draughts; and the swords continued to play till the sun disappearing in the west, and the night coming on with impenetrable obscurity, the armies retired from the field.

On that day the Persians lost twice as many as the Arabs, but still this diminution was scarcely apparent, so vast was their host. As to the tribe of Kendeh, they were quite cut up, for they were without their chief, and his substitute was obliged to fly; so likewise the tribe of Zebeed, they were not in good spirits on account of the wound of their knight; even Maadi Kereb had determined on flight, fearful of death and perdition. As to Rebia, he was congratulating Hadifah on their victory, saying, If the like of this day occurs again to the Absians, every vestige of them will be eradicated. O Rebia, said Hadifah, they are indeed invincible warriors. Never will they be vanquished whilst this slave remains alive among them.

The tribe of Abs thus returned, but in a most deplorable condition; many of their men were wounded. King Zoheir consulted Antar about entering the mountains, and fighting by their wives and families, but Antar swore he would not move till he had conquered those foul wretches; For if, said he, a thousand horsemen will stand with me I will defend this spot, were even man and demon to

assemble against me. They talked all night, but with the first rays of light the horsemen marched rapidly to the contest. They put on their instruments of war, and made a most formidable attack, at which the mountains resounded. The Arabs attacked; the chief Antar was at their head. They commenced the blow and the thrust; horsemen were slain; flames blazed; the multitudes mixed promiscuously; they fought with sword and spear; anxiety fell upon all; the eyeballs rolled round; in every spot they sought for refuge and retreat; spears scooped out the eyeballs, and the scimitars flew against necks; the sabres of death flashed and sparkled like lightning; sword blades and shields were cleft in pieces. Now, they continued in this frightful state for seven days entire; on the eighth day the Absians were unable to contend in open field, though they engaged still among the sand hills and defiles, and their destruction seemed inevitable. Antar was wounded in three places; still he protected the tribe and repulsed the foe, till afflictions falling heavily upon them, the women screamed, and tears burst from their eyes in copious streams, for the oceans of Persia were rushing upon them from every quarter, whilst Rebia shouted to his Arabs in a voice every one might hear, Eh! come on! he exclaimed. Plunder the goods; capture the damsels, all like rising full moons; cut in pieces that Antar with the edge of the cleaving scimitar; tear his carcass with the barbs of the

quivering spears ; and as he cried out, he just turned his head round, and lo ! he perceived a cloud of dust encompassing the whole region, approaching swifter than instant death. Rebia was quite confounded at the sight, and said to Hadifah, Doubtless this is the dust of Chosroe, who is coming with all his host, as he has been long without news of his son ; the evil destiny of the tribe of Abs is at hand, and every vestige of them will be rooted out. But whilst he endeavoured to ascertain what the dust really meant, it opened, and behold there was a valiant army like the waves of the ocean, headed by King Numan, and by his side rode the Chief Hidjar and Oorwah ; and soon after the army galloped forwards, crying out, O by Lakhm, O by Juzam ! *your* misery and destruction are at hand, ye Persians ! for King Numan is come. Rebia heard this exclamation ; amazement fell upon him ; all the joy he felt fled, and misery and grief were let loose upon him. He looked at Hadifah, and he too was in the greatest consternation : They have set at liberty King Numan at last, he cried ; and they are come with him to assist the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and I am convinced no one can have released him but the Chief Hidjar. Soon will he reproach us for our conduct towards him ; he will indeed requite us, and say to us, As soon as you knew of my confinement and my downfall, you assisted my brother, and you fought against my friends : so now we have nothing for it but to conciliate him as well as we can, or

death and destruction will overwhelm us. Stand off from the contest of blows and thrusts, he added, addressing the Arab tribes, for truly King Numan is arrived; he has been released from fetters and chains; he is come in spite of the power of his enemies and his haters. The Arabs listened to this harangue, and looking at the army that filled the desert, they informed each other of the state of the case, and retired from the combat, crying out to King Numan, O thou triumphant!

But as to the rescue of King Numan, it was effected by Hidjar and Oorwah. As we before mentioned, they travelled with two hundred men till they reached Hirah, when they plunged their swords into the necks of the slaves and the shepherds, who screamed and shouted; upon which sallied forth the horsemen of Khorasan, with the satrap whom Khodawend had left to guard Numan, and with him were one thousand Persians. They commenced the engagement, headed by the satrap; but Hidjar encountered him, and heard him muttering in his Persian dialect; he understood him not, neither did he make him any answer, but he pierced him through the chest, and the barb issued sparkling through his back. Oorwah struck the second horseman, and levelled him with the earth. The tribes of Abs and Kendeh shouted out their distinct patronymics as they transfixing the Persians through their chests and their ribs. Hidjar fell impetuously upon them, and destroyed them with

the blows of his sharp scimitar. The riders were hurled off their horses; and the Persians saw the descent of calamities. Their numbers were soon diminished, and their strength and energy failed. A few of them fled; most of them were slain; and Hidjar entered Hirah with his troops, and releasing Numan from captivity, related to him what the tribe of Abs had done for him. Numan thanked Hidjar, as he said to himself, I was persuaded no one would release me but the Absians and Antar. They set at liberty also the thousand horsemen that were imprisoned with him; and on that very day having sent a messenger to his friends, and written letters to his allies, he waited a little to arrange his affairs, rejoicing at his deliverance from bondage; but on the second day by sunrise armies advanced like the rolling ocean, and in an hour more he had an army collected of seven thousand brave horsemen, with whom he instantly departed, traversing the wastes and the deserts, alarmed for the virtuous Absians, till they reached Adja and Selma. And when Numan arrived he had not less than twenty thousand men with him.

We have mentioned the event, and how the Arabs returned to their allegiance. Rebia too advanced towards him, and, kissing the ground, made his excuses; so did Hadifah and the tribe of Fazarah, for they feared some direful misfortune would overtake them.

As to Khodawend, he expected his death, and

retreated from the contest, as soon as he saw what had happened. The Persians, too, being alarmed lest Khodawend should be murdered, surrounded him on all sides through fear of the Arab king, for Khodawend's force was now reduced to fifty thousand worshippers of fire, the remainder having drank of the cups of extinction.

The tribe of Abs issued from the defiles like lions of the den, and in front of them stood Antar, the invincible hero. The Absians looked about in alarm at the horsemen and their numbers, fearful they would want to plunder their property and goods; but King Numan prohibited them from doing so. After this he proceeded to seek Khodawend, accompanied only by Hidjar and Oorwah. Fear not, most revered prince, said he, any hostile movement against you with these nations, for we are indeed the slaves of the imperial government, and the servants of the Persian kings. As to myself, O prince, I cannot see in me that crime that you should seize my person, except indeed my connexion with this Absian tribe; and have you not seen in their contest during these days something to confound mankind? It is on that account I have sought their alliance, for not one of them can be slain without the destruction of a whole body of heroes, and I never intended by means of this tribe to endanger the other tribes of Arabia; but I acted like a provident man, and I had arranged matters in the best manner in my fears for your safety. Your father has

listened to the words of my enemies, and seized me on account of a transaction on which he was misinformed. I have only rescued myself, and am come here, urged by my fears lest the Arabs should harm you, for they are a people that comprehend not the value of kings; but now what is past is past; and the sight of the eye is better than the hearing of the ear. Let your mercy and the mercy of your father be not denied me, for I cannot acknowledge in myself any crime that has merited such severity. Be you reconciled to me, and I will be the protector and defender of your government, otherwise the desert before me is extensive and wide. At any rate I will not separate from you till I have dispersed from you these armies; and I will attend you to your father in the firmest confidence. Khodawend, on hearing this address, meditated, and hung down his head towards the ground in excess of shame, for he was a rare and noble youth, as indeed were all the Chosroes, for they were the monarchs of the world from the beginning of time till now.

Khodawend dismounted, and affairs being amicably arranged, his alarms were converted into security. I will not move, said he to Numan, but with my stirrup against your stirrup: and when I reach my father's presence you shall see what I will do with you and your associates, for I never understood your worth till I felt your power. But I desire of you to bring me Antar here, that I may overwhelm him with my kindnesses and bounty,

and make of him my coat of mail against the calamities of fortune.

Numan turned towards Oorwah, and having informed him of all the circumstances, ordered him to go to Antar, and bring him, with King Zoheir, and all his warriors. Congratulate yourself, O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, on the most exalted honours, and the highest glory; for Prince Khodawend requests you will attend him. The Absians had restrained themselves from the contest as soon as Numan appeared, and they were in that uncertain state when Oorwah came and announced the event. Praise be to God, said Zoheir, who is the cause of our deliverance from death and destruction! We must now indeed go to Khodawend; perhaps this business may be arranged after all these dissensions, and evil and wickedness vanish. What say you, O Aboolfawaris? O King, said he, to my taste there is nothing more advisable than the slaughter of Khodawend by the sword, and the massacre of all his Persians. However, O King of the time, I will not thwart the general opinion on the subject; and not to distress your royal bosom at such a moment as this, I will reply with obedience and submission.

Then King Zoheir took him and departed, accompanied with his sons, and in all one hundred horsemen, whilst Oorwah, going ahead, related all the circumstances that had passed, and how Numan had been liberated. But Antar went on like one going to give false evidence; and when they reached

the Persian armies, the Satraps and the Dilemites stared at Antar as he burst asunder the troops in front of King Zoheir and his sons; and his spear was slung across his shoulders.

They continued in procession till they came up to Khodawend, when they dismounted and saluted him. Khodawend was astonished at such behaviour. O noble Arabs, said he, reproaches at such a crisis would only produce irritation, and the mention of what is passed would occasion animosities. I have only sent for you, to pardon you the blood of my troops, and to ask also of you a remission for all my past deeds. I accept you as supports and friends; and he ordered his slaves to bring forth some high-mettled steeds, which they soon introduced, with also a great quantity of honorary robes and presents. The flames of their hearts were extinguished, and distresses were cleared away; for the Ruler of the World is awful, and his bounties eagerly desired.

O munificent Prince, said King Zoheir, we are indeed the slaves of your government, now and of old; but when a man sees his disgrace before him, it is incumbent on him to cast it off from his person by the exertions of mind and body.

Khodawend presented Antar his own sword, that was one of the swords of Chosroe, and was worth the capitation-tax of Egypt and Irak, when well cultivated and populous. He ordered him also five high-blooded horses, with housings of gold, and turning towards Numan, he said, Take Antar with

us to our throne; for I wish to satiate myself with looking at him, and hearing his discourse.

Numan expressed his submission, and he was overjoyed at this fortunate event, for he was still afraid of Chosroe, and he wished to take Antar with him to his city. So the business fell out just as he had wished, and before night every thing was peaceably settled; they prepared feasts, and their joy was complete.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NUMAN now exerted himself to liberate Prince Aswad, and when they had released him, he kissed his brother's hand, and apologised for his conduct. Numan also made peace between him and the Absians, and the tribe of Fazarah, and Antar, and also Rebia, and Amarah, saying, O Aboolfawaris, peace between cousins is the best of proceedings; and now nothing remains but to settle your own private affairs. O King, said he, I will not consent to marry the daughter of my uncle till after your own nuptials, no, not till your wishes are accomplished, and your festival completed, and Chosroe be reconciled to you without any ill will. But should not all these events be satisfactorily terminated, I will make his very balcony totter over his head. I will slay all that dwell in Khorasan, and I will make you in his stead king of the age and the time.

Numan expressed his thanks to Antar, and they all remained together three days, but on the fourth day they prepared for departure, when, said Numan to Zoheir, Depart home, and make ready for your daughter's marriage till my messenger arrives. Do you too, said Prince Aswad to Hadifah, go home, and prepare for your sister's marriage.

Khodawend then marched with the armies till they reached Hirah, Antar riding by his side. Numan alighted at his palace, and his family were delighted at seeing him. He gave a magnificent entertainment to Khodawend, who two days after departed for Modayin, and his heart, after all his fears, felt secure.

Now Antar and his companions remained with King Numan fifteen days, but on the sixteenth day came the presents, and valuable goods, and articles beyond all calculation or description. For Khodawend, when he came unto his father, found him in the greatest anxiety for intelligence. Know, O my father, said he, we have injuriously treated King Numan, and we have listened to the suggestions of the treacherous, and rebels, and of his enemies: for his connexion with the Absians was a proceeding highly judicious and commendable; and King Numan is the only one that consults the good of our government, for he has a most correct judgment; and likewise Antar, son of Shedad, whose equal is not to be found: and my desire is, O my father, that you would send him a magnificent honorary robe, if you wish for the stability of the imperial government.

Thus he informed him of all the circumstances of the battles. Mubidan also seconded him in this affair, for he loved King Numan. So Khodawend did not cease importuning his father till the business was settled; and being pacified, though at first he

was vehemently enraged, he sent the articles by Mu-bidan, who repaired to Numan, who met him with all his warriors, and prayed for the imperial government: he detained him seven days at Hirah. The greatest part of the presents were for Antar, and also for Oorwah and Hidjar; and when all these favours flowed upon Numan, he felt secure, great as had been his former fears.

Antar soon after asked permission to return home. O Aboolfawaris, said Numan, your departure from me is like the separation of father and son: but I cannot detain you from home on account of your love for Ibla. So he granted him leave to go, after he had conferred on him presents no words can describe.

Antar set out with his companions, seeking the land of Hidjaz; and they continued their journey till they reached the first country of Hidjaz, where they halted for the night, at a water called Kywam. And though Antar was desirous of taking the night-watch, Oorwah would not let him. O Aboolfawaris, said he, I will take that duty from you to-night in this desert. Antar assented, and Oorwah having selected five of his own horsemen, marched out when it was quite dark. They roamed to some distance in the wastes, and went their rounds till the night was quiet, and all was in repose: and as the fresh breezes blew upon them, drowsiness overpowered their senses. They all fell asleep, and not one of them wagged his head till day dawned and

shone, when they returned to their companions, and roused them from their slumbers. They arose, and prepared for departure, but they could not find a single horse. Alas! alas! exclaimed Antar, we have been surprised in the obscurity of the night, and have been robbed of our horses: he questioned Oorwah about what had happened to him during the night; but Oorwah was confounded, and hung his head down to the ground through exceeding shame. O, said Antar, this affair would not even disconcert a woman; and I feel perfectly easy and unconcerned about finding my horse Abjer. So he turned to his brother Jareer; Hie thee away into this barren wild, son of my mother, said he; and return not till you have discovered their track, and if in your way you chance to meet some Arab horde, ask them for a horse for me, that I may mount—(Shiboob was absent when this event occurred, for Antar had sent him home with the women, and gave him charge of Ibla, being alarmed about her on account of that vile family of Zeead).

As Jareer was about to follow the track, the neigh of Abjer was heard, in his movements outstripping the northern blast. As soon as Antar saw him, he was delighted, and cried out, What joy! He shouted towards him, and he replied with a neigh, gratified at his master's voice. Immediately he fastened the housings on him and mounted, saying to Oorwah, Do you and your men mount on these camels, and drive on till we have developed

this affair. And they travelled on till the heat exhausted them, and the desert seemed on fire. Antar was about to halt, when lo ! a man on foot appeared from the midst of the defiles, speeding away like a cloud in a storm, although both his hands were tied ; about his neck was a long rope, and behind galloped a troop of twenty horse, and he appeared bewildered, like one afflicted with a sudden calamity.

When Antar perceived the man on foot bounding along like a fawn, he bent his course towards him. Come, come to me, O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed the unhappy wretch, I am your brother Shiboob, and what has happened to me would even melt the stoutest heart.

At this Antar's heart quaked ; he was greatly agitated, and his two eyes appeared like horse-leeches, till he came up with him. He instantly loosened the cords, and untied the rope about his neck. O my brother, he cried, no Arab shall ever live to enslave thee. Nothing of that has happened, said Shiboob ; but both your story and mine are very extraordinary. Thank God, who has sent you to this spot, or I and Harith, King Zoheir's son, must have drank of the cup of death ; for he is a prisoner too, and I am dreadfully alarmed about him. I have left him with the companions of these horsemen, but I cannot possibly tell you any thing till I am perfectly convinced of security.

Antar was confounded, and turning his eyes at

the advancing horsemen, he gave a shout at them. He attacked them like a lion, and pierced them with his spear : he soon laid low sixteen of them, and the other four escaped by the speed of their horses. He returned, and asked Shiboob what it was all about. My narrative will be very long, said Shiboob, if you do not first tell me who is with you in this country. Son of my mother, said Antar, Oorwah and his men are with me. So he informed him of all that had occurred ; how they had quitted King Numan, and had come down to this spot, and how their horses had been stolen. Son of my mother, said Shiboob, this circumstance of the robbery of your horses has been the means of our salvation ; for the fellows that stole them are forty thieves who followed you from the land of Irak, and their chief is the nuisance of the Arabs ; he is quite an insufferable fellow. I could recognise him amongst the whole race of man ; he is called Awis, son of Saala, the robber. This morning the tribe of Zohran, with whom I have been a prisoner, encountered them : they slew thirty of them, the remainder fled ; and whilst the tribe was occupied with them, I ran away into this desert, till you came up to my assistance. Now, as to the robbers, they had followed Antar and his comrades from the land of Irak ; and when Antar was returning with all that wealth, Awis, son of Saala, happening to have a glimpse of it, assembled forty robbers. Well ! said he to them, if you are indeed desirous of wealth, and the accomplishment

of your wishes, let us follow this black slave; let us expose our lives against him, and let us exert ourselves to obtain this vast property.

That night therefore Awis approached with his associates. How long, said he, must we be traversing these wastes? we cannot bother ourselves any longer. Upon that one of them advanced towards Antar and his companions, and found them all asleep. Much pleased at this, he returned to give information to Awis. My opinion, said he, is, we should content ourselves with their horses, and leave their men alone, and not bring a war dust upon us. They all agreed to his advice, and finding the horses grazing, they mounted some, and drove away the others; but they had not quitted the desert ere daylight shone, when Abjer, not knowing these fellows, and missing his master, burst loose from the person who led him, and galloped over the plain; the men hastened after him till he came nigh unto Antar.

My brother, said Shiboob, it would be well to let Abjer rest a little till Oorwah and his men come up here, that they may mount these horses that we have gained, for the enemy will of course follow me over the desert. Antar approved of the plan, and he let Abjer graze in the desert, and as he was quite amazed at Shiboob's narrative, he directed him to state how he and Harith were made prisoners. Theirs was a wonderful adventure; for when the Absians returned home, they waited in expectation

of Antar's joining them from the country of King Numan, and a great dread of the tribe of Abs had made its way into the hearts of the Arabs. Now it happened that one day Prince Harith went out to the chase, and with him a party of Absians. They had wandered away to some distance from the land of Shurebah in search of game. And as they roamed about the wastes and wilds, east and west, they came to a valley called the valley of Sandhills, where they beheld a large party of the tribe of Zohran. Harith questioned a slave; My lord, said he, we are of the tribe of Zohran, and our chief is Bekir, son of Moatemid, and whilst Harith was in conversation with the slave, a fawn fled away before him. Harith called out to his horse, and he made towards it; but having missed it, he passed by a lake where there was a party of the Zohran women. Now the cause of their removal from home was this. This chief Bekir had a daughter called Labna, and she was more beautiful and lovely than the full moon; her suitors were numerous, and many demanded her of her father, but he would not bestow her on any one. She had a cousin, who was Jareer, son of Cadim. Labna detested him on account of his harsh manners, although he was brave in the field. He demanded her of her father, but he refused; and there arose such an hostility between them, that their removal was absolutely necessary. So they traversed the wilds and the deserts till they reached the land of the tribe of Abs

and Adnan, and asked the protection of King Zoheir, which he readily granted. The damsel Labna, on the day Harith passed by the lake, was in company with her maidens. Harith beheld her, and became enamoured; and she likewise saw him, and all her limbs were in a tremor, and her agitation was great. So she addressed her maidens to take off their attention, exclaiming in verse:

“O truly mine eye has had a glance of the
“youth who has passed me, employed in the chase
“of the fawns;—he is gone, but his charms have
“captivated my heart;—he is gone, and my heart
“still burns the more.”

When Harith heard this, he looked behind him, and love for her took possession of his whole frame. His companions, as soon as they perceived how he was affected, checked him: O Prince, said they, we observe you are discomposed and dejected. Yes, said he, I wish to return home; and when he reached his dwelling, his mother came to him and said, My son, what has distressed you? I went to bed last night, said he, a little indisposed, and what is come to me no one but the Searcher of all secrets knows. But when his mother had quitted him, he sent for his nurse, and informed her of his situation. She listened, and promising to assist him in his troubles, she set out for the valley of Sandhills, where she saw the tents, and introducing herself among the women, she feigned being on a visit to them. At length she came up to Labna, and addressing her,

acquainted her with the state of Harith. She started up on hearing this, and also imparted her situation to the nurse, who said, I wish you would come to-morrow night to the lake. Labna expressed her thanks, and the old woman departed home to Harith, who was most anxiously expecting her. She informed him all about Labna, and the love she felt for him. This relieved Harith's anguish, and at the close of the day he took the old woman with him and set out; and when they reached the valley, he secreted himself among the Erak * trees. Labna too waited till evening, and then with one of her maidens went away to the lake, where she found Harith, and threw herself into his arms. They remained till daylight, and this became the spot of their future assignations, till one day he happened to ride out towards the valley of Sandhills, but he perceived no vestige of the tribe. In the greatest agitation and astonishment he returned home, and he became like a living corpse. The cause of this removal was a messenger, who came to them from their chief, reproaching them for their migration, and he was called As-hath, son of Dharnah. Not being aware of their total removal from their country, he waited for some time till he heard they had gone down to the tribe of Abs and Adnan. So he sent after them, saying, As to Jareer, son of Cadim, I have seized his person on

* Trees, with the leaves of which they feed camels.

your account, and I desire you will return to your native land.

Labna's father, hearing this message, was delighted to revisit his home, and his rage was quenched. But when their departure was ascertained by Harith, he informed Shiboob of all that had happened, and of his present situation. Shiboob pitied him. They waited till it was dark; Harith saddled his horse, and enveloped himself in his armour and rich corslet, according to his custom. Shiboob too grasped his bow and quiver, and filled his portmanteau with arrows, and they both set out for the land of the tribe of Zohran; and on their arrival, said Shiboob to Harith, Do you lie concealed here. But he himself departed for the tents, clothed like a poor infirm beggar; and he disguised his designs very cunningly till reaching the tent of Labna's father, O mistress! he exclaimed to an old woman, have you any victuals? Yes; wait for me a little, said she. She came out and said, Here, take these bean-shells, you famished fellow, and pray to the mistress of joys for a happy meeting of lovers; perhaps your prayers may be accepted. Are you a stranger in this land? said Shiboob. No, said she; but my mistress has a lover with the tribe of Abs, and she is out of all patience on his account. Is it not Harith, son of King Zoheir? said Shiboob. Yes, answered she, and I see you know him. Yes, he returned, for he is my master; so he told her all the story, and of Harith's arrival. Let him stay

where he is, said she, for her father has resolved on marrying her to Kheitaor, who has even sent the whole of the marriage dower to her father, and there are only three days now to the wedding. The maid ran to Labna in haste, and told her of her conversation. Return, said she, and tell him to go back to his master; assure him that I will join him, and that he must take me away with him. She arose as soon as it was dark, and all the family were asleep, and went to Shiboob, taking her she-camel with her, on which he loaded all she possessed. Lead this camel, said she, and go with it to your master. Away went Shiboob, and Labna followed him till they met Harith. Come with me, cried Shiboob to them. Labna mounted her camel, and Harith his horse, whilst Shiboob held the camel's bridle, and they set out traversing the wastes.

But Labna's father and mother, when morning dawned, sought for Labna, but she was not to be found. They raised a hue and cry, and informed Kheitaor, who mounted with a party of his warriors, and questioned Labna's father about the circumstance. My lord, said he, I heard on my return from the tribe of Abs, that Harith, the son of King Zoheir, was in love with her, and he must have carried her off. By the faith of an Arab, cried Kheitaor, I will overtake him by sunrise, and will slay Harith and all the tribe of Abs. Having stationed some troops in different places, he himself set out with five hundred stout horsemen.

But as to Shiboob, and Harith, and Labna, they travelled under the veil of the night till morning dawned in smiles, when they reached the vale of Fawns and the mountain of precipices; this was a lofty mountain, and perfectly inaccessible but by one road. Arrived at the meadow beneath, they were desirous of alighting near it, when lo! ten slaves came towards them from the mountain's side, shouting and running impetuously. In front of them was a black slave like a lion. These slaves had occupied this mountain as a refuge and a safe retreat in their escapes after the perpetration of murders; and when they were hard pressed they climbed up the mountain, and defended themselves on its summits. Their chief was called Habis, and as soon as they saw Shiboob, and Labna, and Harith, they made at them, calculating that the horseman would escape by flight; that they should put the man on foot to death, seize the camels, and enjoy the damsel. But they knew not that this man on foot was a blaze of fire and a crashing thunderbolt: for as soon as Shiboob perceived them hastening from the mountain top, he met them resolutely, and smote their chief with an arrow on the chest, forcing it out quivering through his back. The slaves, seeing their chief dead, shouted at Shiboob, and all their wrath was excited against him. Harith galloped after him to assist him, but an arrow fell on the chest of his horse, and down he fell. Harith instantly sprung on his feet and

exerted himself to the utmost behind Shiboob on foot, whilst Shiboob practised all his arts, hurling them over with his arrows, and slaying them one after the other till six of them were killed, and only four survived. They made bitter reflections to themselves. I cannot think this can be a mortal man, said one, he must be indeed a devil, and he dwells hereabouts; for our chief used often to say he had seen a ghoul in the plain, and we ever bantered him about it. Talk not now of that, said another, let us escape in haste to the top of the mountain, and they fled; but they soon perceived that Shiboob had arrived before them at the head of the pass: Ye dastardly Arabs, he cried out, whither would ye fly? Your death is at hand. The first he struck down with an arrow on the chest, and it issued out through his back: he came up with a second, rushed upon him, and smote him with his dagger through the heart, and laid him prostrate; but the other two fled over the barren waste: so Shiboob returned to Harith, who thanked him for his exertions. O Ebe-reah, said he, I am now left on foot in this desert, and the way is long.

They were thus conversing together, when lo! a troop of horsemen appeared, headed by Kheitaor, and he was like a tower or a fragment rent from the mountain's side, and Labna's father was riding by his side. When Labna saw this, she was in despair. Here then is certain death, said Harith, and we have no other resource but this mountain where

these slaves retired ; for if we were at its summit, we should be secure. And I, said Shiboob, will empty my quiver before me, and will show you a little of my skill, and I will defend you against the inhabitants of the whole world, wide and long as it is. I will disperse this party over the sand-hills. Let us only ask for succour from the Lord of the Fountain Zemzem, and the Shrine. Do as you please, said Harith, but how shall we ascend this mountain ? and will not our fears and terrors enfeeble our exertions ? Be sure of success, said Shiboob, and he went up to Labna and took her upon his shoulders, and went off with her on foot, till he reached the skirt of the mountain, whence he clambered up with her till he was on the heights. Harith followed him.

But when Labna's father and his party saw that Shiboob was like a bird, they were amazed, for he ascended the mountain till he approached the summit. The party in pursuit overtook Harith on the mountain's skirts, for he was weighed down by his armour. He defended himself, and exhibited his prowess till numbers thronged upon him, so they took him prisoner, and Shiboob was in the deepest affliction. The troops alighted in the meadow under the mountain, and afterwards rushed one after the other to ascend, in order to accomplish their hopes with respect to Labna and Shiboob. But Shiboob overthrew them with his arrows till darkness came on, when they returned, thwarted in

all their attempts, many of them wounded. Upon this Kheitaoor and Labna's father halted, in the greatest alarm at Shiboob's arrows. We are indeed quite nonplused by this devil, said Kheitaoor, all we have for it is by daybreak to seize hold of Harith and prepare for hanging and torturing him; and we will say to Shiboob, if you do not surrender our daughter to us, we will hang Harith, and make his dwelling in the tomb. Here we will besiege you till we catch you, and we will take your life from between your sides. So they bound Harith fast, and stationed over him two black slaves.

Harith laid himself down, suffering the acutest grief and affliction. But Shiboob returned to Labna and comforted her heart, vowing to her he would ransom him with his own existence; and he remained quiet, till being convinced that the influence of sleep prevailed over the party below, he descended, sliding down on his back till he was at the bottom of the heights, where, having recourse to his stratagems, he made a minute scrutiny right and left, and at last perceiving the slaves were asleep, he approached them and despatched them all. Continuing the enterprise on which he was bound, he crawled along on his hands and feet till he entered the tents, where he heard Harith thus speaking:

“ O my tribe, the fetters of captivity have bound
“ me fast; there is no escape for me from these gall-
“ ing chains. They pounced down on me early in
“ the morning, or their thin blades would soon have

“despoiled my life. O my cousins, I had not con-
“gratulated myself on a day’s meeting, when se-
“paration befel me. Fortune has overthrown me
“with a deadly arrow, and for its sting there is
“no panacea. O my cousins, seek to revenge me
“when I am gone, where the high-spirited steeds
“charge. Tell Antar, the son of Shedad, that I
“cannot escape from their hell-flames; he will be
“a match for the foe with his irresistible sword, to
“him all lovers weep their sorrows. Alas! for
“Labna! what anguish must she endure in my ab-
“sence when separation shall afflict her! I ima-
“gined we should all live happily together in se-
“curity, and all our flames would be quenched.
“But Fortune has tormented us with separation;
“there is no faith, no covenant with Fortune.”

When Shiboob heard these verses repeated by Harith, he knew that he felt assured of death and Perdition; his heart grieved for him; he advanced towards him—he found him tied down—the slaves about him were asleep—he came closer—he rent the fetters from his feet, and cut away the handcuffs—he calmed his apprehensions. Follow me, said he, and do as I do; and he went crawling along on his hands and feet: they continued stepping over the fellows asleep, till they were beyond the tents, and then they pursued their way in the greatest haste till they reached the summit of the mountain. As soon as Labna saw Shiboob and Harith with him, she was delighted at his contrivance. Shiboob took out

some victuals, and they reposed in comfort and happiness till the day dawned, when Kheitaor starting up from his pillow, sought Harith, but he could not find him; he only saw the handcuffs cut away, and the slaves murdered and lying dead on the ground. Eh! ye wretches, he cried to his people, behold the prisoner was fast bound, and a single person has released him from the midst of ye, and yesterday he destroyed your bravest warriors; how will you now defend yourselves or your chief? This is all your doing, and he resolved on putting to death the other guards; but Labna's father prevented him. These men are not to blame in this business, said he; we were in fault, that we did not station a guard over the mountain's side. We shall never succeed in seizing him, if we do not all mount against him, and slay this devil, for he has already killed fifty of our men, and we shall be a disgrace to the end of time. They set out with the whole party, who were ordered to ascend the mountain; they accordingly began to climb, shouting, but alarmed. When Shiboob saw this, he emptied his quiver before him, and strung his bow; he bent down on one knee, and shot his arrows against their chests and their necks; the men fell down like leaves. Harith quitted Labna, and threw immense stones down upon them from the top of the precipice; in a short time fifty were killed. So Kheitaor retired in despair and disgrace, writhing in agonies of terror. The tribe of Zohran, he exclaimed, is

rendered infamous among the Arabs. By the faith of an Arab, were I to encounter a thousand horsemen in the field, it would be an easier task for me than this devil. And he turned towards the warriors, and told them they must struggle in the contest. They continued in this state till darkness came on.

On that day all Shiboob's arrows were expended by the number he had shot, and the men and chiefs he had slain. Kheitaoor stationed ten horsemen on the skirt of the mountain, whom he ordered to lie concealed among the rocks, saying in the height of his passion, Whoever shall sleep, him will I destroy. I will be near you, for I am convinced that this devil has expended all his arrows: however, he will not abandon his design; he will therefore come down this night against you when the people are asleep, and will steal away your arrows. I expect therefore you will watch him till he descends, then seize him. But beware, should he escape from you, I will strike off all your heads; for in his speed he will outstrip the winds, and I have not a horse that could overtake him.

Thus he stationed the men, and enjoined them to be on their guard. As to Shiboob, he was all anxiety till night came on in obscurity, when he started on his legs, and hastened down the mountain till he reached the bottom of the heights; but he had scarcely recovered his breath, when the men sprung upon him, and surrounded him on all sides.

He rushed against them like a lion when he terrifies, and in his hand he held his dagger; and though he slew numbers of them, they at length took him prisoner.

The intelligence soon reached Kheitaor: the whole party arose and struck lights. Thou art fallen at last, thou devil, said Kheitaor: and having ordered his shoulders to be tied well down, Labna's father and the rest started away for the mountain.

Harith saw all this, and he was convinced of disgrace and misery. He immediately drew his sword out of the sheath, and fought as long as he had powers and strength, till he had slain ten slaves, and brought down perdition upon them, and also two of the Arab chiefs. At length numbers overpowered him, and they took him prisoner, and they bound him miserable and dejected. Bekir advanced towards his daughter, who was trembling like a reed; he dragged her by the hair to the bottom of the heights, and would have slain her, had not Kheitaor prevented him.

They halted in that place till day dawned, when they lashed Harith to the back of a horse, and fastened a long rope round Shiboob's neck, and stationed a slave over him to haul him along. He endured it all very patiently, till coming close to him, he gave him a kick on the stomach, and dashed out his bowels. He darted forth into the deserts, and they all endeavoured to gallop after him in a

body, till the robbers rushed upon them from the barren waste, and with them Antar's horses. Having slain them and carried away their horses, Kheitaor and his companions returned in pursuit of Shiboob till they met Antar. As soon as Kheitaor's eyes fell on Antar, he attacked him; galloping and charging he sought the contest, and thus addressed him:

“ Lord of the noble black steed, and the sword,
 “ and the penetrating spear, if you indeed succeed
 “ in destroying any of our horsemen, fortune must
 “ have betrayed the invincible lion. When she
 “ offers a slave the cup of sweetness, she errs, in
 “ giving him to drink any thing but coloquintida.
 “ Tell me what you have seen; and know that
 “ mine is a never-failing scimitar in the revolutions
 “ of fortune. In every land I have left for the wild
 “ beasts and the birds a sea of blood shed by my
 “ sword. When I am present in the fight on the
 “ day of battle I exterminate every lion-warrior;
 “ when I even retreat the foe trembles in horror;
 “ and you might see the whole earth in the circum-
 “ ference of a dirhem. So have recourse to some
 “ subterfuge that you may escape by it, for apolo-
 “ gies cancel even the most heinous offences.”

Antar heard Kheitaor's address, and laughed exceedingly, and thus replied in verse:

“ Verily I say I will slay your horsemen, and I
 “ will leave their flesh as carrion for wild beasts,
 “ for my spear indeed complains of the inconve-

“ nience of thirst ; but now I have met a day when
“ it shall be moistened with blood. What ! have
“ you not known my power ? truly, the warriors of
“ all the cities of Persia confess it ; and the heroes
“ of war on the day of battle die at the mention of
“ my intrepidity and liberality. When I lose my
“ way over the desert in my nocturnal solitude, my
“ only company is my sword, resembling inevitable
“ fate. It is never drawn but on its separation
“ from the sheath a sea of blood gushes from its
“ edge. My piebald steed has a white crescent on
“ its forehead, like the dawn of day, and its black
“ is like the sable raven. These two are my sup-
“ port on the day of contention ; and the barb of
“ my spear sparkles like a speckled serpent. How
“ many heroes have I abandoned as food for the
“ wild beasts and every ravenous lion.”

Antar had not finished his verses when he rushed upon Kheitaor, and frightened him ; he shouted at him, and made him tremble ; he pierced him with his spear between the paps, and drove it out through his back, and Kheitaor fell dead weltering in his blood. When his companions perceived what calamity had overtaken him, they rushed on from all sides ; Antar met them with a frightful assault, and laboured among them like a blazing fire. In an hour forty of them were slain, the remainder fled and sought Labna's father. But Antar returned like a raving lion to his brother Shiboob, and his object was accomplished upon his enemies.

Just at that time came up Oorwah and his men. They were greatly surprised at seeing the scattered horses of the enemy, and were exceedingly rejoiced. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah to Antar, whence are these horses you have obtained? Antar related the adventures of Shiboob and Prince Harith's captivity. On hearing this they alighted from their camels' backs, and having mounted the high-blooded horses, they went up to Shiboob, and saluted him.

But as to the fugitives, they continued to flee away over the desert from Antar till they reached Beker, son of Moatemed, to whom they announced Kheitaor's death, detailing every circumstance, and the destruction made among the horsemen. Eh! and who, said he, is the warrior; who is the dreadful lion that has slain him? A black knight, said they, mounted on a black steed, as if hewn out of a black rock, and in his hand is an Indian blade; and we heard him, as he fought among the horses, crying out, Ye base cowards, I am Antar, the son of Shedad. May God curse your fathers above all men! exclaimed Labna's father. What! has all this happened to you by a single knight, and he a black slave, powerless and insignificant? Know, said one of them, that this is the knight whom horsemen have described as overthrowing alone a thousand warriors in the plain, vanquishing them by his intrepidity and superiority. Labna's father shuddered. What sayst thou? he cried. Who ever be-

held a single horseman attack a numerous host? Return with me, and I will show thee what I will do. Mount these steeds, he cried to his horsemen, and make towards this slave with your scimitars and your spears.

And they put their horses on their speed, and followed him, when behold, the dust of the Absians sprung up, and their shouts arose, and they advanced like fate and destiny. It is my opinion, said one called Jifal to Labna's father, that you should let me pass over the desert, taking ten horsemen with me, that I may bear away Harith and your daughter, and convey them home; and do you attack Antar with the remainder. Take as many men as you please with you, said the other.

On that Jifal returned, and with ten horsemen departed, travelling on till they reached the place where they had left Harith and Labna; but they could see nothing of them, and no appearance of their track. We are indeed disappointed in our pursuit, said Jifal, and Labna has escaped us.

They passed on, when lo! shouts arose in their rear. They turned about to see the cause of this uproar, and behold their own horsemen and Arabs, all seeking flight, pursued by the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Jifal struck his horse's rump, and fled towards his own country, followed by his companions. The fugitives were scattered in tens and twenties, and they continued in this state till night advanced,

when Antar coming up with the Absians, What think you of this affair? said he to Oorwah; we have routed the foe, and have succeeded in our attempts; but we have not released either Harith or Labna, and I am afraid they have carried them away, and have sought their own country, and if Harith should be delivered to As-hath, the business will become desperate, and he will be put to death for Kheitaoor: Shiboob indeed is gone on before us, and till he returns this is a serious affair; for if I pursue these fellows till I destroy them, I shall be separated from my brother Shiboob; and if I stay here till I have some intelligence of him, I fear Harith will be exposed to peril, and every vestige of him erased.

Whilst they were thus conversing, they heard some men shouting from the mountain, and saying, Come hither, O Aboolfawaris, for we have found Harith, and he is indeed despairing of life. Antar, on hearing this, took Oorwah with him, and having ascended the mountain, Antar called out to Harith, who opened his eyes, and mourned his sad state, relating what had happened to him. The cause of it was this: when the fugitives came groaning to Labna's father, and related Kheitaoor's death, Bekir mounted, and sought the contest with his companions, having left his nephew Jireer with Harith and Labna, and two stout slaves. Instantly, Jireer unsheathed his sword, and making at the slaves, smote them with his cleaving scimitar, and slew

them all. He sprung at Harith also, and struck him with his sword, and dreadfully wounded him; and then mounting Labna on one of the fine horses (thinking Harith was dead), he abandoned him, and rode away on his own high-mettled steed, with the design of going with Labna to some of the noble Arab kings, and to defend himself against accidents under his protection. In vain Labna shrieked aloud, and looked about to the right and left, praying for succour.

As to the subtle Shiboob, he set out in quest of Harith, and did not stop his progress till he came to that spot, where he saw no human being, but the slaves murdered. Advancing towards them, he also perceived Harith lying between them, groaning piteously. At this sight Shiboob stood aghast with horror: O my lord, said he, who has done this? Harith's heart was strengthened at seeing Shiboob; so he told him what Jireer, Labna's cousin, had done. Shiboob took him in his arms, and ascending the mountain with him, on the summit he found a ravine, in which he laid him down, placing him in security: Shiboob then questioned Harith about Jireer; What road has he taken? he asked. He directed him to the quarter, and immediately Shiboob left him in the mountain, and let loose his feet, seeking the barren waste, and following the tracks of Jireer. He continued his course till he overtook him by break of day, and heard Labna's screams; she was weeping, and in the greatest affliction.

Shiboob was delighted at seeing them; he hasted towards them, swift as the twinkling of the eye, and smote his horse on a vital part. The horse plunged with him, and threw him on his head. Shiboob sprung upon him, and stamping on his chest, stabbed him with his dagger, scattering wide his entrails, and annihilated his existence.

Labna, in the excess of her terrors, was bewildered; and when Shiboob came up to her, she exclaimed, Who art thou, O Arab? I am Shiboob, said he; and he gave her an account of Harith, and soothed her heart. He returned with her till he joined his brother Antar, whom he found just as he had brought away Harith from the mountain. On seeing Shiboob they were in ecstasies of joy, and grief and sorrow quitted them. Labna ran up to Harith, whose life, as soon as he saw her, returned to him; and thus reunited to her, his happiness was complete, and he forgot in her society all the pain of his wounds.

Antar remained the rest of the day in that spot in security, and by dawn of day he departed with his horsemen, seeking the land of the tribe of Abs and Adnan. But, as his love for Ibla burst upon him, he thus rhapsodised:

“ Oh! is it the fragrance of musk? is it *itr**? is
“ it a voice, or the breeze warbling over the desert,
“ that sings of her? Is it a flash of lightning? or

* Oil of roses.

“is it her teeth in the wastes, resembling the full
“moon when it rises? Is it the branch of the tama-
“risk that sweetly waves in the wilds? Is it the
“stem of the spear, or her form? Is it the narcis-
“sus of the gardens, endued with visual powers, or
“her cheek, like the untouched apple? I rave
“through love of her; but let my railers see the
“torrents of my tears, to which there is no end!
“O Ibla, my heart for love of thee suffers tortures;
“this frequent separation, and these echoes, fill me
“with grief. O Ibla, fear not thy enemies, for
“against the destiny of God there is no oppo-
“sition.”

When Antar had finished, the horsemen expressed their delight at his prose and verses; they travelled before him, traversing the wastes, till there only remaining one day between them and the land of Abs, Antar sent on Shiboob to give notice to King Zoheir of the safety of his son Harith. Shiboob set out by dawn of day, and about midday he returned. It is impossible that you can have returned, having ever reached home, said Antar. O my brother, said Shiboob, I reached home, and saw all the horsemen dispersed about the country, mounted on their steeds. I inquired what was the matter of one of them, and he informed me that King Zoheir rode out with his son to congratulate and meet his brother Asyed, on his arrival from Mecca on a visit; and we have now heard, he added, that they have been taken captives. On this

account, the horsemen have mounted in order to release them; and he who has plundered them is a notorious knight, and an obstinate warrior, accompanied by a troop of noble horsemen. And hast thou heard, said Antar, in what country they were detained prisoners? Yes, said he; the troop came upon them in the valley of Irak trees. This is a most extraordinary circumstance, said Antar, that our Princes should be taken prisoners, and perdition come upon them. Certainly, no one has ventured on such a deed but one fearless of mankind, and unintimidated at death.

Antar sent Harith and Labna with twenty warriors to the dwellings and homes; but he himself with his men set out for the valley of Irak trees, preceded by Shiboob.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHEN King Zoheir missed his son Harith, he sent out his slaves in every direction, and he remained anxiously expecting their return till the happy tidings of his brother's arrival reached him. Asyed was one of King Jazeema's sons. He was a learned man in that age of ignorance, and he generally passed his time at the sacred shrine and Zemzem. He was full of virtue and liberality, loving justice and equity, and detesting violence and oppression. He every year paid a visit to the tribe of Abs, teaching them the distinctions between right and wrong, and arranging their affairs, and when he arrived this time, he sent forward to King Zoheir to announce his approach. His brother went forth to meet him with three hundred horsemen, all like stern-faced lions, and all his relations and uncles, for King Zoheir was the father of ten, the brother of ten, the paternal uncle of ten, and the maternal uncle of ten. They continued driving away the wild animals over the wastes and the sands till evening came on, when having halted in a valley till day dawned, King Zoheir marched on without any apprehensions, till meeting his brother Asyed in the sandhills of Erak, he and his attendants dismounted and saluted

him. My love and affection for you, said Asyed, have exceedingly distressed me, otherwise I should not have quitted the fountain of Zemzem, and the holy mansion, and the sacred shrine. They proceeded towards the middle of a valley, which was called the valley of Tamarisks. The wild beasts and the deer fled before them. King Zoheir looked about and observed his brother Asyed, who was pointing with his hands towards the trees, and the tears were streaming from his eyes; burning sighs burst from his heart, and as he poured forth the groans of a woman deprived of her children, he thus addressed the trees:

“O trees of the Tamarisks, where do ye behold
“them? Do the people of my vows dwell in your
“neighbourhood? I look all around, but the hand
“of ravage has destroyed them; yet never have I
“broken my former protestations, I have not be-
“trayed them; my vows were made to one like the
“full moon, resembling the branches and boughs
“of the Tamarisk,—but I am alone and solitary,
“though once we met, and here, now they are gone,
“are only the owl and the raven. O trees of the
“Tamarisk, whither are they gone? They are
“gone, and in my heart passion has left a burning
“flame. If ye ever, after being watered, complain
“of drought, my tears to-day shall form a lake
“around ye.”

When Asyed had finished his verses, his sighs became more frequent, his countenance changed, and

his agony increased ; his brother advanced towards him, having heard his discourse, and asked what was the matter, but he observed him still pointing to the trees, and thus exclaiming :

“ O trees of the Tamarisk, in the name of God,
“ tell me what ye know, for I am overwhelmed with
“ inquietude. Pity the tears of a distracted lover,
“ whose eyes weep over these devastated plains.
“ The valley is abandoned ; but there was an inha-
“ bitant like the fawn, richly robed. Speak to me
“ of Selima, of Robab, of Zineb, and those, resem-
“ bling brides, in the sand-hills. They have aban-
“ doned me in misery—they are gone, and I weep
“ over the remains of these desolated scenes. The
“ raven moans over the vestiges of these spots,
“ where no more are seen the tents of my mistress
“ and the horsemen. Take then, ye boughs of the
“ Tamarisk, my tears, that flowing would moisten
“ the saturated as well as the parched up soil. Al-
“ though the covenant between us is dissolved, yet
“ my love for thee bids me not despair ; I live in
“ hope that God will make us meet in joy, as if we
“ had never been parted.”

King Zoheir was so struck by his grief, that he ran up to his brother Asyed, and interrupted his speech, saying ; I cannot permit you to finish these verses, till you inform me what affliction has befallen you. I conjure you, by the sacred shrine, to tell me what this means. O brother, said Asyed, if I tell you my story, you will have an indifferent opinion

of my discretion and honour; but indeed I am not much to blame, as I did it in the days of my youth. Know then, my brother, that the year our father, King Jazeema, made his pilgrimage, I accompanied him, and when our pilgrimage was expired, as we were on our way home, we happened to pass by this place, in which I saw a vast quantity of wild beasts and deer. My father rode on and went home, but I remained for the sake of the chase. Thus occupied, I remained till the meridian heat overpowered me, and the sultry air became so excessive I returned also, seeking the track of my father; but I chanced to pass by this tree, and when I reached it I saw a very old Sheikh beneath it, and with him an immense quantity of camels, and also his daughter, who was tending them at the pasture. She was the most beautiful and most elegant of forms, and as soon as I came up to him I saluted him. What do you want, young man? said he. I only said, Will you accept of a guest when he comes? Welcome, said he, to me, in winter and in summer. But, young man, every one according to his means. On hearing this, I resolved on alighting at the lake, in order to drink and water my horse. But the Sheikh prevented me, and called out to his daughter, who brought me some fresh camel's milk and gave me to drink, and also watered my horse. I remarked the beauty of the maiden, and I perceived her moving in the plains of loveliness. Her father, too, observing the symmetry of my horse and my rich gar-

ments, brought me some victuals. Excuse my scanty offering, said he, for I am a poor man, and the liberal pardon when they see the apology is sincere. O Sheikh, said I, this is the greatest charity ; but if you will accede to my wishes, I would request you to accept my proposal, and gratify my desire with regard to your daughter, and you shall then go with me to my tribe. I am anxious you would receive me as her husband, and I will take you to my land and family ; speak to me and bestow her. By Him who has created her and fashioned her, I added, take all I have about me as part of her marriage dower ; and I took off my sword belt and my horse trappings, which were all of gold. The Sheikh at the sight of this was much surprised and delighted, and came towards me without hesitation, and giving me his hand for the marriage, drove away the camels and cattle, and went to his own dwelling, and I accompanied him ; and on our arrival he slaughtered all the sheep he possessed and some she camels, and rejoiced in me as no one ever rejoiced before, and married his daughter to me that night. I tarried with them three days, and afterwards I informed them who I was. I staid some time longer, and quitted them, bearing in my heart the greatest attachment for them, and intending to return to them with abundant wealth. Having reached home and joined my family, I despatched a slave to conduct my wife to me, and sent with him a great quantity of camels and sheep to this valley and desert. I re-

mained, anxiously expecting them, till my slave returned in despair, and brought back all my property. I asked him what was the matter? I have seen no one there, my lord, said he. I staid some time quiet, and despatched emissaries to all the Arab tribes, and expended amongst them much gold and silver, but I never could obtain any intelligence of her. And even now, my brother, I bear her in my memory. It was on her account I attached myself to Mecca and the sacred shrine, till I this day beheld these remembrances of her, and now all my sorrows come upon me anew; and whilst I meditated on the past, I was anxious that you should come with me to this spot, that I might renew the vows made so many years ago. King Zoheir, on hearing this narrative, was amazed at the revolutions of the days and nights. He dismounted, and ordered the slaves to clear away that spot, and spread carpets for them under the tamarisk trees, and the horsemen soon returning from the chase, bringing with them hares and deer, they made a sumptuous feast, and expressed great delight in the presence of King Zoheir and his brother Asyed, making the time pass pleasantly for them, and availing themselves of the delicious hours in joy and delight; and they kept carousing till the cups of wine overpowered them, and darkness came on, and there was not one but fell asleep, in which state they remained till the nocturnal wanderers on the watch surprised them. A troop of

horses came upon them about the break of day, and perceiving the spoil, and no one to protect it, they surrounded them on all sides, and took them prisoners. Now these horsemen belonged to the tribe of Cahtan, and were called among the Arabs the race of Cayan, and their chief was a brave knight, an intrepid warrior, well skilled in the art of war and battle, named the Chief Nazih. As soon as these horsemen had fallen into their power, they returned home, and none escaped of all King Zoheir's sons and brothers but Zambaa and Warca with three slaves, who made their way home, and raised an uproar among the dwellings, and instantly the horsemen mounted, all seeking the valley of Tamarisks. The whole tribe were involved in universal mourning, and loud were the groans and lamentations; it was at that crisis that Shiboob arrived, when he found them oppressed with affliction, and the horsemen already on their way to the valley of Tamarisks.

On Shiboob's inquiring what was the matter, they informed him of all that had passed, and what were their plans. He immediately returned and told his brother Antar, the lion hero, who sent Harith and Labna home, whilst he himself with his companions departed in order to release King Zoheir.

But as to the tribe of Cayan, they continued traversing the deserts till the forenoon, when the meridian heat oppressing them, they halted to

repose by the side of a lake called the Lake of the Waste. Here King Zoheir recovered from his intoxication, and also his sons and brothers, and the other horsemen, but they found themselves in fetters and disgrace. What horseman art thou? said King Zoheir, turning towards the knight of Cayan, and to what Arabs art thou connected, that thou hast braved the princes of the tribe of Abs and Adnan? By the future and the past, we have not fallen into your power but by the will of fate and destiny, so we will ransom our lives with whatever thou pleasest, and we will thank thee; avail thyself of the friendship of such as us.

Nazih, at hearing this, started on his saddle and swaggered about: O God, thanks be unto thee! he exclaimed, I did not know that you were of the tribe of Abs till this moment. With you will I terminate all my sorrows. At last fortune has had pity on me. Youth, cried Asyed, surprised at these expressions, what have we to do with such language? Hast thou any revenge against us thou must satisfy? I have no debt, no retaliation against you, said Nazih, but I will proceed with you to one who is your enemy and foe. He is my lord Obad, son of Temeem, with whom I was brought up an orphan till I attained this high station. I am enamoured of his daughter Dhimya, and am wrecked in the sea of love for her. On her account I endure battles and perils, and have exhibited my

prowess against the inhabitants of Sana and Aden. Besides you, I have found no opposition ; but he is most anxious to have hold of one of ye. Yet I have always heard every one say, Beware, approach not the tribe of Abs ; but now ye have fallen into my hands, and I will through ye succeed in my designs. Conduct us out of the road, cried he to his comrades, that neither friend nor foe may meet us. So they did as he directed, and Nazih was overjoyed, marching in front of the horsemen, till darkness overspread the land, when they halted by the waters of the tribe Akhrem ; and as they were near home, they imagined their important concerns would succeed, for King Zoheir despaired of safety, and so did his brothers and his associates. At day-break Nazih set out, passing over the barren waste till the forenoon, when lo ! a dust appeared in front of them that involved the whole region for an hour. Soon after the dust opened, and there appeared underneath it a man on foot like a bird when it flies, like a leopard when it maddens. Behind him were horsemen clad in iron, like the calamities of extermination. Ahead of them was a black knight on a black steed ; he was girt with a well-proportioned spear, and his roar was like the roar of a lion. He was the knight of the swarthy Abs, and their brightest ornament—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the chief Antar, son of Shedad. How is it, exclaimed Nazih, that this party has

been directed to this spot? They seem but a small number of horsemen, their fate has driven them to death and perdition.

The guide who had conducted them through these ways was called Aboolgharat, son of Aboolfita, the most intelligent man of the time for traversing the wastes and barren wilds. O Nazih, cried he, our hopes are frustrated—our pains are baffled—our object has failed—we have forfeited the aid of heaven, and we have encountered here the slave of the tribe of Abs, and not one of us will effect his escape; but as to your expressions, of how this party was directed to this place, I know that Antar has a brother called Shiboob, by his mother Zeebeba, and he is the calamity of calamities; the misfortune of misfortunes; for when he departed with his brother from the land of Irak at the beginning of the night, he did not halt with him in the morning but in the land of Syria. As to me, I know the roads and the ways no one of all the tribes but myself ever knew; and I am well aware, from my own feelings, when I am in company with any one that can puzzle me, or distract or confuse me in the wilds. But after all, my advice is, that you release the tribe of Abs from bondage, and relieve us from battle and contest, first securing protection from them: do not engage this great warrior, for he is not like those horsemen you have hitherto encountered. Nazih bellowed and foamed: What mean these words? said he, am I with a hundred horse-

men of the tribe of Cayan, and they Himyarites and brave heroes, and shall I fear the contest with this black devil? This day shalt thou see how I will bring destruction upon him. I will make an example of him amongst mankind. And he rushed towards Antar, galloping and charging to and fro; he thus burst out:

“ Away! ye that reprove me, I will not listen to
“ ye, my railers, I will not answer either by word
“ or deed. Let me die young; the swords of India
“ that tear out life are preferable to a life of dis-
“ honour and infamy. It is not the approach of
“ the day of battle that alarms me; it is not flight
“ that shall rescue me from death. Who is he that
“ avoids it, though death should encounter him?
“ Death is sweeter to my heart than honey. I
“ have indeed taken captives the chiefs of a power-
“ ful tribe. I am a knight, and the world can
“ testify it.”

Nazih having finished his verses, Antar commenced his attack upon him, and as he charged him, he thus expressed himself:

“ O antagonist, that wouldst desire a contest
“ with me in the battle, and wouldst aim at me in
“ the confusion of spears! How many armies, how
“ many camps have I routed! and have assaulted
“ when the water-mills of war were revolving!
“ The lightning of my sword flashes through the
“ dust, and its brilliancy sickens the eyes of all be-
“ holders. The barb of my spear falls on the chests

“of the east and west, till they are all mangled, and
“I will defend the tribe of Abs for ever till I die,
“and their name through me shall be renowned.”

Antar again turned upon Nazih, and attacking him, exclaimed, Eh! what a coxcomb art thou amongst thy fellows! thou must be frantic! What Arab art thou? But this day I will silence thy presumption; I will make thee an inhabitant of the tomb, and I will make thee feel the ill-luck of thy resistance against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and of thy daring violence against the prince of the age.

By the faith of an Arab, said Nazih, I have obtained unbounded good from the tribe of Abs, and I have captured every one of their chiefs and princes, and soon will I bring down annihilation on thee. At hearing this, Antar's passion increased, and he rushed upon him, eager for his death. Nazih met him and fought him; they engaged till their limbs were powerless, and the perspiration streamed down their bodies, and the blood flowed from their wounds. Indignation seized the heart of Nazih; he rushed at Antar and thrust at him, quick as the twinkling of the eye, aiming at Antar's chest; but in this thrust the spear came short, and as it was falling between the eyes of Abjer, Antar warded it off with his shield, but it wounded him in the thigh; then indeed was his wrath roused; he pounced down upon Nazih, and struggling with him till he quite exhausted him, he stretched forth his arm

towards the belt of his armour, and dragged him off the seat of his saddle, and took him prisoner. Shiboob ran up to him and received Nazih from his hands; he bound fast his shoulders, and tied down his arms and his sides, whilst Antar shouted out to his horsemen, and ordered them to strike and thrust. So they attacked the tribe of Cayan, and plied their swords and their spears among them; and the dust arose over their heads. Perdition fell upon the horsemen of Cayan, and the horsemen of Yemen, and they were overwhelmed with perils. The Absians slew thirty of them, and took seventy prisoners. In the mean time Shiboob, seeing them all occupied, hurried towards King Zoheir and his associates, and released them, slackening away from them the tightness of the bow-string. Antar also soon came up with his comrades and saluted King Zoheir, who told him what had passed. O King of the time, said Antar, it is incumbent on every one to give way to the changes of fortune, for it is ever treacherous. But pour forth your thanks to the great God for your deliverance, and your release from this perilous situation. Antar also related all that had happened to him in the land of Irak, and how his horses had been stolen from him on the road, and how he met Shiboob, and Harith, and Labna, and the tribe of Zohran; how he released them all, and slew Kheitaor. O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, my son Harith lives then? Yes, said Antar, and is now with his family and relations. Glorious indeed are

thy works, O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, for I had despaired of my son. But now conduct us home. King of the age, said Antar, it will first be advisable to cut the throats of these dogs. So Shiboob went up to Nazih first of all, who was in the greatest agony; he stripped him of his clothes, and his body appeared whiter than hail, and above his wrist was a bracelet of cornelian, and on it were shaped two images of burnished gold in the form of Lat and Uzza. As soon as Asyed saw this bracelet he recognised it, and perfectly recollected it; and as Shiboob was proceeding to despatch Nazih, Hold, my cousin, he exclaimed, a little for me, and he advanced towards Nazih; his agony of mind increased; he took the bracelet in his hand, he kissed it and wept over it; he sighed and sorrowed. Whence had you this bracelet, young man? he quickly asked. Nazih shed a torrent of tears; Know, my lord, said he, I was brought up an orphan among the tribe of Cayan. Who was your father? demanded Asyed. O my dread lord, said Nazih, I never knew who was my father; neither do I know of what Arab tribe he was. I was brought up as a poor fatherless orphan by the charity of my master Obad, son of Temeem. He has a daughter called Dhimya, and I have loved her from the days of childhood. On her account I have engaged my equals, and have subdued horsemen, and although I am mad to demand her in marriage, modesty has prevented me; and oft I say to

myself, I shall be this evening in his tent, then it shall be done ; and again, to-day I will demand his daughter, but I have never ventured yet, and were I to drink of the draught of death and perdition, I shall never approach him, however great my influence is over him, and however serviceable I have been to him. But in my heart I conceal my love for his daughter, and it is only to my mother I complain when my sorrows oppress me ; and my mother, she sometimes says to me, O my son, you can never find any relief for this passion till you make an attack upon the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and are roused to seize some of their chiefs and bring them here, then may your plans succeed. For, O my son, your master Obad has an old vengeance against them ; and if you do not march against that country, you will never gain your point. Mother, I said to her, I hear every one extol the tribe of Abs for their irresistible steadiness in the day of battle, and they are the knights of extermination and of instant death. But my mother still would say, good luck is oft in penury, and victory comes from God ; and moreover, if you have fears, you must ever live a trifler. But take with you this bracelet, on which is the name of the Lord of heaven and earth ; your father gave it me, alas ! alas ! on the night he was wedded to me—and he said to me, Preserve it ! So if you succeed in your wishes, praise be to the God of Zemzem and the shrine ; and should you be taken prisoner,

this will liberate you from bondage and infamy. I took it from my mother and bound it on my arm, and I set out on an expedition against the vagrant tribes with these hundred men, and I did not discontinue my journey over the deserts till I came to the spot, the valley of Tamarisks, where we overcame you and succeeded in our attempts. There indeed shone clear the proof of my mother's sayings, and with you I was traversing the wilds and the wastes till I encountered this black, this dreadful warrior, and infamy fell upon me, and now you are come to cut off my head.

As Asyed listened to this tale, a shuddering came over him; he gazed at Nazih very minutely, and tracing the well-known features, he clasped him to his bosom, and kissed him between the eyes, exclaiming by the truth of the sacred Shrine, Thou art my son!—thou art a part of my heart! I gave this bracelet to thy mother Selma, and my name is inscribed thereon, and thy mother only sent thee to this land to gain authentic intelligence of us. O my brother, added he to Zoheir, the times have changed and turned round, and what was lost is come back to me: it was of this young man's mother that I spoke to you. All that were present, when they heard this story, were in amazement. But Antar dismounted and received Nazih with great kindness, and kissed him between the eyes, for he was a true lion warrior, and a noble knight. Nazih was much pleased: O tribe of Abs, said he, indeed you are

the mine of liberality and generosity, and he who is connected by birth to you can never care for death. I indeed rejoice in your parentage, and in my union with your lineage, and I will be as a slave among you. Yet must I interrogate my mother about my father, that the truth may be fully proved, and I realise all my expectations.

Make no such delays, O Nazih, said Aboolgharat, you have no occasion to inquire of your mother on this subject, for I am better acquainted with it than any one. I was the person who conducted your master Obad to this country; he invaded it, and took your mother captive. We returned home immediately under alarm that the tribe of Abs and Adnan might overtake us, and on our arrival we divided the spoil, and your mother fell to the lot of your master Obad; and as soon as her pregnancy became evident, he questioned her about her situation, and who was her husband. My husband was slain in the valley, said she. Thus she concealed her story, and never revealed the secret to any one, fearful of death and perdition. This man is your father, and you are his son; but this is no time for talking at length, for we are about to have our heads cut off. At hearing this the noble Nazih smiled, and his heart pitied his people when they communicated to him his real situation; but Asyed hastened and untied his handcuffs, and did the same to the others, and mounted them on horses, and they all set out for the land of the tribe of Abs,

Nazih travelling by the side of his father Asyed, who talked pleasantly with him, and gave him accounts of his mother. Now that it is certain that you are my father, said Nazih, I have no more anxiety on your account; but I must bring my mother here. I am, however, distressed when thinking how I shall remain with you among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and my mother in the tribe of Cayan will suffer death and infamy; particularly when Obad hears I am an Absian he will not let my mother survive a day, and I shall die of sorrows for her, and regret for his daughter Dhimya. O my son, said Asyed, it appears as if I must either abandon your mother in the hands of foes, or you drive Dhimya from your heart: but let us say no more till we reach home and join our tribe. Thus they travelled on, highly gratified, till evening, when they halted at the waters, and waited whilst the horses were refreshed. They took their dinner, and again mounted their steeds, and passed on during the darkness of the night till morning shone, when they reached the valley of Tamarisks; but as soon as the sun rose they perceived the camp of the tribe of Abs, who were hasting over the desert in pursuit of King Zoheir, for every family was in movement. And as King Zoheir and his party approached, the first that espied them was Rebia; he had also set out on that expedition, hoping that King Zoheir would receive his deliverance at his hands, and thus would his past actions be erased from his

heart: but he was disappointed. The tribe advanced and saluted King Zoheir, and inquired the cause of his captivity, and how it had happened. He related the whole to them, and also the story of Nazih, at which they were in astonishment. Rebia came up to Antar, jealous that King Zoheir had been released by him, and said, O Aboolfawaris, there is no day but we see you in it, for you are indeed the daily food of friends. May no evil, no harm ever reach you! for you are our polished sword and our long spear. Antar thanked him. About evening they set off: they crossed over the desert, and reposed that night in the valley of Erak. In the morning they resolved on pursuing their way: O king, said Asyed, I will go with you to the tents, and thence I will proceed to liberate my wife Selma, and will gratify my son's designs upon Dhimya, for unless I effect this he will never feel happy in staying with us. If such is the case, said King Zoheir, we will all proceed to the cities of Yemen with our warriors and armies, and we will not return till we have accomplished our purpose. No, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab no one but myself shall proceed on this expedition, for I do not see the necessity of your taking all that trouble and anxiety. On hearing this, Rebia thanked him for the loyalty of his spirit. Admirable! my cousin, said he; and I and my brother also, we will go with you, and will expose our lives on this occasion.

Now this speech was only meant to excite Antar to the expedition, for he was vexed at him, as all his plans had failed through him; so he wished him to expose himself among the cities of Yemen, in the full expectation that the calamities of fortune and perils would put an end to him. Antar thanked him for his speech, though well aware of his malice and insidious motives.

We cannot agree with you in this respect, said King Zoheir, we will not let you go into Yemen to endanger yourself on our private necessities with only one hundred horsemen: take with you a thousand of the most tried warriors, that our hearts may be at ease about you. O great king, said Antar, were I even going to the conquest of the cities of Syria, or to fight with the Chosroe of Persia, I would not take so many as a thousand horsemen. I do wish it may be publicly announced that your slave Antar invaded the cities of Yemen, and those countries, with only one hundred horsemen, every one indeed a hardy warrior; and that he executed his objects, and returned with affluence and plunder. But my heart does not feel happy that I should undertake this expedition before my Lord Harith has wedded his bride Labna.

Now Harith was recovered of the wounds he had received; he was quite well and in good health. They continued till they reached their native land, and universal joy and delight was the result of their arrival. They made entertainments and feasts, and per-

fect happiness and felicity dwelt among them. They slaughtered cattle for the banquets; the liquor and the wine went round; the damsels beat the dulcimers; and the high and low were in full glee. Labna was married to Harith; he entered unto her, and he was happy. After feasting seven days, Antartar prepared for his expedition and passage over the desert, in order to finish the affair so interesting to Asyed and his son Nazih. He took with him his father Shedad, and three hundred horsemen of the race of Carad; Asyed also went with him, determined on success. King Zoheir accompanied them to take leave, and when they reached the valley of Erak they left King Zoheir behind, and quitted him there. He returned home, and Antartar departed for the cities of Yemen.

But as to King Zoheir, he had not rested two days after Antartar's departure when Numan's messenger arrived, and with him innumerable camels, and robes, that amazed the eye, and also a thousand Asafeer camels. When King Zoheir learnt the arrival of the messenger, he went out to meet him, and welcoming him to his dwelling, made him dismount, and treating him hospitably, inquired about King Numan's health. And when he had described to him all the goods and presents destined for him (and indeed the quantity was immense), King Numan, he added, salutes you, and desires you to send him your daughter, merely herself; but not a single article of your own property, for he

does not require of you either goods or presents. King Zoheir upon this made a long panegyric on King Numan.

Aswad's messenger also arrived about the same time at the tribe of Fazarah, who did the same towards him as King Zoheir had done with regard to King Numan's. The cymbals were struck up in the hands of the damsels, and they remained in this state seven days. On the eighth day the howdahs were raised on the backs of the camels, decorated with splendid velvet. The ladies were lifted in, accommodated on silken cushions and couches. The standards and ensigns were unfurled, and the men rode round them like lions. Hadifah accompanied his sister with one hundred horsemen, and King Zoheir sent his son Shas with his daughter; and they continued traversing the deserts, the Arabs treating them as they passed, till they reached Hirah. And when Numan heard of their approach he went out to meet them, his brother riding by his side, and surrounded by troops; the drums were beaten on all sides, and this was a day of joy and pleasure, the like of which was never known in the whole world; for Numan gave away alms, made presents, distributed gold and silver, prepared magnificent entertainments, and had tables covered with meat. This continued in the same manner for ten days, and Mootegeredeh was married to King Numan, and the hour and the time were most propitious; and Maria was also married to his brother Aswad, and

theirs was a state of happiness never experienced before by man; each realised his hopes, and all their friends and well-wishers rejoiced. In three days the Arabs separated, and every one took his own road, and every chief sought his own clan. Aswad invested Hadifah with an honorary robe, and also the chiefs of the tribe of Fazarah. So also did King Numan towards Shas; he bestowed on him rich presents, and gave him splendid robes, and treated him in the most distinguished manner.

When Shas saw this, and all the rich presents that were produced before him, O king, said he, do not bestow on me any article of your property, not even to the value of a halter. We only coveted your connexion on account of your glory, and the honour of your name. Numan thanked him; and having loaded the she camel that had conveyed his bride with aloes, and amber, and musk, and perfumes, he also wished to send with him an escort of troops to attend on him and protect him. But, said he, are you not my relation? King Zoheir my father? the tribe of Abs my countrymen? and the protector of our lands and our property, the Chief Antar, son of Shedad? and shall I go with an escort? No! by the faith of an Arab! So he bade them farewell, and departed in company with Hadifah and the tribe of Fazarah.

Now Shas had no one with him but the slave that drove his camel; and when they were at some distance from Kufah they began to converse about

the weddings and the feasts, and each of them talked about his connexion, and what had occurred during the entertainments. Hadifah was quite extravagant in his eulogium of Prince Aswad, extolling him greatly, and preferring him to Numan. Shas was now aware that they wished to irritate him by their discourse; but as he was anxious to put a stop to any enmity or ill will between them, he separated from them, feigning a desire to indulge in the hunt and chase. As soon as Hadifah saw this, he said to his cousins, Let us away over the wastes and the wilds, and let us escape from danger and destruction; perhaps some one may fall upon him who will cut off his head, and will take his horse and his armour, for he is also one of Antar's friends. Thus they passed over the deserts, and Shas followed behind, who being thus separated from Hadifah, travelled alone, amusing himself on the skirts of the waste, and rejoicing at having avoided their misconduct, till he reached the waters of the tribe of Aamir, where he arrived in the obscurity of the night, and as he was exceedingly thirsty, he was much troubled. By the side of the lake there was a huntsman chasing the wild animals as they passed to and fro; he was called Thalaba, the son of Aaridj. He was extending out his nets, and fixing them by the water-side, and as Shas came up, the wild animals being frightened away, the huntsman was much annoyed, and he cried out to Shas, Who art thou? thou hast spoiled my sport, and hast driven

away the beasts from me. Fear not, young man, said Shas, for I will reward you for what you lose. But have you a drink of water, that I may quench my thirst? Ay! you shall have water from me, said the huntsman, but not water that shall moisten your thirst or relieve your entrails. Shas, on hearing this, was very angry, for he was a prince and the son of a prince. You dog of the tribe of Aamir, said he, were you not a poor miserable fellow I would punish you in the manner that kings punish. But the huntsman immediately drew an arrow from his quiver, and fixing it on the centre of his bow, aimed it at Shas by the sound of his voice, and it struck him through the heart, and it hurled him dead off his horse. The slave, when he saw his master fall headlong, left him there, and departed home to the tribe of Abs, making all speed in his flight. Then came up the huntsman, and examined him, and looked at his horse, and lo! its trappings were of gold; and perceiving the garments of a mighty prince upon him, he was in the greatest agitation. He dug a hole for him in the sand, and buried him; but he took away the horse and the camel, and hastened home, and when he came to his wife he acquainted her with the circumstance, and directed her not to discover it to any one. He slaughtered the camel, and distributed the meat, concealing the property and perfumes, and the fine horse. And thus it was all over with Shas.

In the meantime Hadifah reached the tribe of

Fazarah, and the whole universe could not contain him, so excessive was his joy. King Zoheir heard of his arrival, and his heart was in a flame about his son Shas, till the slave also came back and informed King Zoheir of the murder of his son. Great indeed was this affliction. His tears, his lamentations were incessant; he tore off all his clothes. The news soon reached his mother, and his brothers, and his comrades, and their distress equalled his. The whole clan was absorbed in tears, and sobs, and groans. The next day arrived Rebia; and in three days more King Zoheir assembled in haste all his lion warriors, and prepared two thousand horsemen that would have infused fears even into the genii and the fiends. And they departed, traversing the burning sands, seeking the land of the tribe of Aamir; and at their head rode King Zoheir, his heart ulcered with grief, and by his side was Rebia; and they continued their successive marches till they drew nigh to the land of the tribe of Aamir; and when their dust appeared, Ghashm *, son of Malik, mounted, and went out with a party of his people to meet King Zoheir, and saluting him, O great king, said he, art thou come to our land to take your pleasure with us, and to hunt in the vicinity? O Ghashm, said King Zoheir, we are not come on a visit or as guests. We are come with no other purpose but to extirpate you with the sword. What,

* Surnamed the Brandisher of Spears.

said the Brandisher of Spears, has produced this enmity between us, that we should deserve such violent measures at your hands after such friendship? Ay, said King Zoheir, for my son Shas, on his return from his relation, King Numan, was slain at your waters. O king, said Ghashm, who told you this? The slave that accompanied him, said King Zoheir, informed me of his murder and his destruction. And would you, O great king, added Ghashm, take away a man in health for one in sickness? and have you believed a base slave to our prejudice? and had even the slave told the truth, how many thieves and robbers are there in our neighbourhood! But if, notwithstanding this, you are resolved on shedding blood, God forbid that hostility should arise between us! But if you will not assent to my proposal, and you are certainly a man of honour, at least have pity on the widows and the infirm. King Zoheir, on hearing this address, returned, alarmed at the consequences of violence and oppression. He hastened his march till he reached home. But his son Cais was extremely afflicted, and wept bitterly, saying, I will not permit the blood of my brother to pass away in vain. I myself will undertake this business. It happened that this was a year of drought and scarcity, and the people were in total want of every thing. So Cais selected two she camels, and loading them with dried dates, and wheat, and butter, sent for an old, grey-headed woman, from whom there was no sort

of deceit concealed. Take these two camels, said he to her, and go to the land of the tribe of Aamir, but take special care not to discover yourself; buy nothing in exchange but rarities and valuable articles, and when any perfumes fall in your way, inquire whence they were imported.

As soon as the old woman heard Cais's instruction, she understood the whole affair, and she departed with a heart proof against all perils. He, however, sent with her some one to conduct her to the tribe of Aamir, and when she reached the dwellings, she roamed about and offered for sale her stock of wheat, inquiring for excellent perfumes in exchange. They produced all the perfumes they had, till she came, in her rounds, to the families of Ghani and Kellab; and, moreover, she importuned the whole tribe of Aamir till she reached the house of Thalaba, son of Aaridj, the huntsman. He himself was, at that period, away from his wife, who, in his absence, being in want of provisions, and seeing this stock brought by the old woman, cried out to her to come into her tent; she conducted her in, and offered her for sale some aloe wood, and musk, and amber, and as she inhaled the fragrance of them, the barren waste was scented with their odour. The old woman was quite amazed at the extraordinary qualities of these perfumes, and their fragrance quite intoxicated her. O my mistress, said she, this is indeed a rarity not to be purchased with wheat. The God of old knows my intention, and may I

never lose my daughter ! For God's sake, do now take all my stock, and relieve me from any further trouble and delay. But tell me whence was this perfume brought you, for in no place whatever have I ever seen any thing like it ; such as this is not to be found at any merchant's or perfumer's. I will not inform you on this point, said Thalaba's wife, and I will not reveal the business to you unless you promise me, by him who fashioned the human frame, that this affair shall not proceed from you to any human being, and that you will not acknowledge it to any one, man or woman. The old woman acceded to her proposition. O aunt, said she, my husband is called Thalaba, the son of Aaridj, the huntsman, and he gained, in this pitiful business, what no one of the servants of God ever gained before, for one day he was by the side of the lake hunting. It was night, when a youth called Shas, son of King Zoheir, passing by, frightened away the wild beasts, at which my husband was very angry and abused him ; the youth spoke in terms that irritated him, so my husband struck him with an arrow and slew him, and when the business was over my husband went towards him and perceived the whole catastrophe. A slave had accompanied Shas, and there was also a black-eyed camel, laden entirely with these perfumes. The slave, on seeing what had happened, fled away, and my husband, having first buried Shas in the sand, immediately came home, and with him the horse and camel ; he is now

gone to sell the horse and the trappings in some of the Arab hordes, and will bring me back some gold and silver. Now, were you not a foreign woman I should not have informed you of this extraordinary story. But still I will not let you go after this meeting, till you have given me your promise not to tell any one. I am a foreign woman, said the other, and am very old, and I live in the land of Yemen, and I have never heard any one mention the tribe of Abs or their king's son, Shas. So she made the required promise, and took away all her perfumes, and put them on the two camels; and, bidding her adieu, she departed much pleased at what she had done. She instantly set out for the land of Abs, and she thought she should never reach home, so eager was she to execute Cais's commission, and inform King Zoheir of his son's death, till she actually arrived and related the surprising circumstances that had occurred to her. Now, do what you please, said she, and make whatever arrangements you choose. And what man slew him? said he. Thalaba, the huntsman, said she; and she informed him what Cais had done in his ingenuity, and showed him the perfumes. King Zoheir wept and sobbed, the tears streamed and flowed, whilst he thus gave vent to his grief in verse:

“The vicissitudes of fortune have thrown me
“into misery and wretchedness, and fortune has
“ever evinced its treacherous disposition. I am in-
“volved in affliction by it, as if I were the friend of

“intoxication, produced by excess of wine. It has
“left me in solitude; I have no one to assist me.
“O that I were with him; united to him in the
“tomb. When the messenger of Shas’s death ar-
“rived, grief took possession of me, and I am
“bewildered. O Shas, thou hast cast a grief into
“my heart that will not pass away, were even my
“life to pass away. Think not, O vengeance, that
“thou shalt sleep, now that he is gone. Let not the
“goose imagine it shall escape the vulture. Soon
“shalt thou see the Absian warriors plunge into
“deaths, and seas, and horrors. The kings of the
“earth shall see that we are able to take vengeance
“on their boldest heroes.”

To arms! to arms! cried King Zoheir to those that were about him, and he mounted that very day, accompanied by all the chiefs and Rebia, who thus exclaimed, in verses:

“I was heedless of the nocturnal depredators, and
“my heart is insensible to joy. A calamity has
“befallen me that has taught me afflictions, and the
“heaviest sorrows. O my tears, flow fast from your
“stores for the loss of our hero. O my tribe, I have
“lost one who was my sword, and my right hand,
“and left hand, in the battle. He was a crown on
“the heads of the tribe of Abs, brilliant as the full
“moon; but that moon is on the wane and is lost,
“now that the hostile hand has aimed at him the
“fatal arrow. O tribe of Aamir, do ye not dread
“the assault, that would even endanger the summits

“ of the caverned mountains. O land, now Shas is
“ gone, what can protect thee? Will the heavens
“ shadow thee from destruction? Our steeds are
“ fearless in the contest, and our swords are death’s
“ harbingers in the battle. The barbs of our spears
“ bear witness that the heights of glory are our
“ mansions of honour. The kings of the universe
“ are our slaves. They serve us, and we are the
“ lords. Shall they venture to oppose us? and we
“ are on our thin-flanked coursers, like dragons.”

When King Zoheir looked round at his sons and saw not Shas, he wept bitterly. They hastened their march, and a burning flame was concealed in their breasts, till they reached the tribe of Aamir. Their chief and ruler was called Khalid, son of Giafir, and their knight that protected them in the days of trouble was the Brandisher of Spears, Ghashm, son of Malik. The family of Ghani had also a skilful warrior whose name was Rebia, son of Ocail, and the family of Kellab had also a horseman called Jandah, son of Beka. These three tribes resided in one land, and their waters approximated, and they were nearly related. But at that time the chief, Khalid, was absent with Prince Aswad, in the land of Irak, who had also married the daughter of his brother, Akhwas, and her name was Saad; and when Khalid heard of Aswad’s marriage with Hadi-fah’s sister, he took with him some of the chiefs of the tribe of Aamir to visit him, and when he was about to return, his niece would not let him go. O

my uncle, said she, stay with me till I see how I like my situation ; for, indeed, if I am annoyed, I will return to my own country and my family. So he staid some time with her, and it was during his absence these events occurred, and King Zoheir invaded the tribe of Aamir, where he found the dwellings without their warriors, and there was no one but the Brandisher of Swords with a few men. Now, when they saw King Zoheir return, they rode out to meet him, and made a very humble address to him, inquiring the cause of his return. He informed them of the stratagem Cais had adopted, in order to succeed in his object ; he also told them that Thalaba, the huntsman, had slain his son Shas. On hearing this, and ascertaining it to be true, they searched for Thalaba, but could not find him. Upon this they sent for his wife, and ordered her to confess ; she acknowledged what her husband had done, and produced all the perfumes she still had. King Zoheir was highly incensed, and his eyeballs started into the crown of his head. O tribe of Aamir, cried he, I demand of you one of three conditions. First, that you return me my son as he was ; but if you cannot effect that, fill then my outer cloak with the constellations of heaven ; and if you cannot effect that, I demand of you the whole tribe of Ghani, that I may sacrifice all their children and their parents. O my lord, said they, verily you insult and outrage us, and demand of us impossibilities ; for he who requests what no human being can perform, oppresses

and tyrannizes. It is impossible for any one to revive the dead or kill the living, but Him who outspread the earth and vaulted the skies; but as to your proposal of delivering over to you all the tribe of Ghani, it is a thing you in your senses could never suppose we should do, for you are a generous king, therefore do not exact the living for the dead. But as to exciting war and dissensions among us, heaven forbid that we should ever have recourse to such a proceeding, and that we should exchange our security for alarms and fears. But we will pay you ten times* the price of blood, and we beg of you to set at liberty our women and our daughters. Thus the tribe continued till King Zoheir was duped and relented. Consulting with Rebia about the abandonment of retaliation and their return home, O king, said Rebia, what is this you say? How can we raise our heads among the Arabs, if we permit the blood of Shas to pass unrevenged? And, unsheathing his sword, To arms! to arms! he exclaimed, and rushed with his drawn sabre among the tribe of Aamir, whilst the sons of King Zoheir, also joining in a similar shout, extended their spears and plied their scimitars among them. The shouts arose on all sides; the tribe of Aamir put on their arms and defended themselves; the battle became furious, and many were slain and wounded. Blood flowed and streamed, and the dust uprose and sickened the eye-

* Ten camels was the price of blood in those days.

balls of the shouters. Heads were severed from bodies ; the tribe of Aamir just kept off the contest from their children, but were reduced to great distress as the confusion and uproar increased. The tribe of Abs cut through them by the force of their steeds, and slaughtered numbers of their horsemen and troops. On that day the only one that could fight on the offensive, and repel the attack, was the Brandisher of Spears, for he was one of the renowned heroes and celebrated warriors ; but observing the tribe of Abs, how they overpowered him, and the numbers of his own party, how they were cut up, and alarmed for their total annihilation, and the destruction of his country, he took with him a party of his tribe, all noble horsemen, and repaired to King Zoheir, who was under the standards ; he dismounted and paid obeisance, and kissing his hand, O dreaded king, said he, do not the deeds of a coward, for you are a great prince. Draw back your swords from us, that we may extract this tribe for you from the midst of us, and may separate from them and deliver them over to you. Do not destroy us for the crimes of others, leave us quiet in our lands and territory. All I request of you is, to delay for the remainder of this day, and to-morrow morning come on and the tribe shall be yours. He continued to engage his compassion in this proposal, and so humiliated himself, that King Zoheir was induced to agree to his request. I grant you, said King Zoheir, the term of this day, so that no blame

or reproach may attach to us. And he immediately directed his slaves to order back the troops from the contest. The Brandisher of Spears returned to his tribe: Now then, said he, entrench your women and families on the summits of the mountains, for I have circumvented King Zoheir in my discourse. Let us occupy a strong post for some days, till the sacred moon shine upon us, when battle and contention must be stopped, and these unexpected oppressors must depart. Moreover too, our Chief Khalid may arrive from the land of Irak, and he will avert from us this insupportable calamity.

The tribe of Aamir, on hearing this, were convinced of the expediency of the measure. So they all hastened away, and struck their tents and dwellings, every one carrying away his property, and placing his family in security among the mountains. Before daylight, the whole country was abandoned, and they moved like waves towards the hills.

By the dawn of day King Zoheir mounted, and when he saw what they had done, he was aware that the Brandisher of Spears had deceived him. He was furious with passion, and marched in haste against the Aamirites, with his men, and besieged them in the mountains. All that fell into his hands he made to drink of the cup of death and extinction, for the troops were greatly exasperated. They continued in this state for five days, and then arose the sacred moon. It was the month of Redjeb, which the ignorance of the Arabs sanctified. War

ceased during that time, and had it happened that any one had killed his father or his brother, it was never spoken of to him, and he could not be brought to trial. The Arabs went every where unarmed; and for that reason it was called the deaf and dumb month, for the ears were insensible therein, and the Arabs, laying aside their arms, repaired to the holy Shrine, and made a pilgrimage, demanding forgiveness of sins.

When King Zoheir perceived the rising of the moon, and that the month of Redjeb had commenced, his heart was in flames, and burned with rage. He abandoned the contest, not to give an evil example among the Arabs.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE Absians were returning home, when, said King Zoheir to his son Cais, Fetch me hither your mother, that we may visit the holy Shrine, and pass these days there: and thence I will return to these dastards, and will extirpate them with the sword. Cais accordingly departed, and went home. King Zoheir afterwards repaired to Mecca, after having waited for the arrival of his wife, and a party of female attendants; and they halted in a part of the sacred valley, which had been the quarter of the Absians for ages; for the Arabs had ever possessed there each their respective abode.

At this time also the Chief Khalid returned from his visit to his niece, and as he was passing with his followers by the sacred Shrine, he sought the fulfilment of his religious duties, previous to his proceeding home. So he made also a pilgrimage with a party of Aamirites, and amongst them was the Brandisher of Spears. They all met Khalid, and informed him what had passed, and the plans they had adopted; how King Zoheir had invaded them, to seek vengeance for his son Shas, and the numbers he had slain.

At this recital Khalid's eyes became like fire:

Woe, woe unto thee, O Zoheir, son of Jazeemah! he cried. Alas! that I was not present when thou didst perpetrate that villanous deed. Truly thou hast taken advantage of my absence, and hast slain some of my family and my tribe; but if I do not requite thee for thy acts in the dusty fight, I am not of the loins of Giafer. He reposed, and at dawn of day he went round the Shrine and the portico, and met King Zoheir in the circuit. He no sooner beheld him than his very entrails were on fire. Zoheir, he exclaimed, thou hast indeed accomplished thy iniquitous projects against the tribe of Aamir; thou hast availed thyself of the inferior numbers of their troops. Thou hast violated our wives, and our noble matrons. Truly, I have had my revenge, replied Zoheir, and I have quenched my fury: had it not been for this sacred month, I would not have left among you either an old or a young one, and I must root out every vestige as soon as these days are expired. Dost thou not fear, said Khalid, that the vicissitudes of fortune may turn against thee, and against thy family, and that thy vestiges may be rooted out as those of thy predecessors?

Then went Khalid towards the Caaba, and prayed, O Thou, who hast raised these columns, and hast consecrated the glory of this place, and hast made it a sanctuary for the Arabs, let not this year pass away before my hand rest on the neck of Zoheir; grant me but to reach him, and through thee I will vanquish him. But Zoheir, in the excess of his

presumption, thus said, O Lord, let not this year pass before thou grantest me the accomplishment of my designs. Let my hand rest on the neck of Khalid, and no assistance do I require against him.

Now, as he spoke, there was a crowd of Arabs around him, and as soon as they heard these words, they kissed the columns of the sacred shrine, and turning towards King Zoheir, In this very year thou wilt expiate with thy life the words thou hast spoken, cried they all. Did I not respect these days, said Zoheir to them, I would drink of the blood of Khalid, as guests drink of wine. And Khalid turned away from him, and all the Arabs separated. Khalid, after remaining at Mecca three more days, set out to his own country with his tribe, and thus exclaimed in verse—

“Prepare, O Zoheir—come to the field—let our
“blood flow—let the forbidden now become legal.
“O tribe of Aamir, brandish with me the parbed
“spear, and unsheath the sword. Incur not dis-
“grace in the day of attack; sell your lives, and die
“honourably. If infamy establish itself in our
“dwellings, haste away and quit the tents. O tribe
“of Aamir, the time is eventful; raise the sword
“against your foes. Lay low Zoheir and his sons,
“when they quit Zemzem and the shrine. Draw
“upon them the sharp scimitar, tear off their flesh
“and their bones, that we may destroy the sup-
“ports of Abs, as our brother laid low Shas. Let
“us make their wives widows, and by the death

“ of their heroes let us make their children orphans.”

When Khalid had finished his verses, he pressed forward his march, his heart boiling with a blazing flame against Zoheir, and with him was the Brandisher of Spears and ten horsemen. On reaching home, they perceived that their families had come down from the mountains, and had pitched their tents on account of the sacred month. But in many of the dwellings there were wailings and lamentation for the horsemen that had been slain. Khalid went down among them and consoled them. On that very day he assembled the three tribes, and informed them what had passed with Zoheir in the land of Mecca; and I am resolved, he said, to attack the tribe of Abs, and I will not stop till I have succeeded in my project, and when I have slain Zoheir, I will repair to their lands, and I will exterminate their families and their tribe; for Antar is absent, and they seem fearless of calamities.

The Aamirites assented, and prepared for the march, amounting to five thousand brave horsemen. And when there was only a short space of the sacred month remaining, they terminated all their preparations in seven days and departed, Khalid having first sent different parties by different routes, and appointed a leader to each. Haste then, said he, on this expedition, and let us all meet in the land of Howazin. So they separated, and set off for the spot he had pointed out to them, where they con-

cealed themselves, and remained in anxious expectation of the event. But as to King Zoheir, the pilgrimage being now over, he returned with his followers, and his heart was boiling with rage against Khalid. He continued his march till he reached the market of Ocadh, where he halted among the Arabs, who entertained him for three days; and quitting them in security, he pressed on under the influence of Fate, till he came to the land of Howazin, where he halted at the waters about the evening. He took his repast, and did not repose till night. O my father, said Prince Cais, march with us during the night; perhaps we may avoid the tribe of Aamir, for you indeed have stamped on them the foulest disgrace, and I fear for your sake their Chief Khalid. King Zoheir, on hearing these words, exclaimed, What sayest thou, O Cais? Who are these vile Aamirites, or Khalid, or all the inhabitants of the barren waste? By the faith of an Arab, I will not stir hence for three days. Cais, when he heard this, felt aware that death was at hand. But he roused his companions for the contest, obliged as he was to yield to his father's authority.

At the dawn of day, whilst King Zoheir was sitting among his tribe, behold a horseman advanced in haste from the quarter of the tribe of Aamir, and that horseman was the brother of Temadthur, King Zoheir's wife, and he was come as a spy from the tribe of Aamir. He had long since established himself among them, and married one of their

women ; for he detested King Zoheir, because he had banished him from the country ; and had not his sister Temadhur been present, Zoheir would have put him instantly to death. So when King Zoheir drove him away, he took refuge among the tribe of Aamir, and settling himself among them, married there, and adopted all their habits, never ceasing to abuse King Zoheir. We have mentioned that Khalid was waiting in ambush for Zoheir ; O my cousins, said he to his comrades, who of ye will go to the waters of the land of Howazin, and procure intelligence for us of Zoheir, son of Jazeemah, so that our labours may not be lost, nor our projects fail ? O Khalid, they replied, for such an expedition you need no one but Amroo, son of Shireed, for he is a relative of that tribe, and one of them ; and he is the only person that can procure intelligence for us : he has a very good excuse when he sees them that can give no umbrage, for he can say to them, I am come to congratulate my sister on her return from Mecca. Thus he may observe where they have halted, and tell us of their march. But I fear, said Khalid, he may betray us, and impart to his tribe all we have done. Upon that score there is no fear, said they ; his hatred to King Zoheir is unquestionable. On this, he ordered him to his presence, and telling him what he wanted, Amroo thanked him, and assented, saying, I will bring you the required news, provided you will make this condition with me—it shall be a covenant between

me and you, and for it I must take the firmest engagement and promise. They agreed to his proposal, saying, Explain to us your demands.—When you have slain King Zoheir, said he, and you have succeeded in your wishes, capture not my sister Temadthur, and slay not one of her sons.—Let this be a sacred covenant between you and us, said Khalid; and he promised all he required, requesting his aid in the accomplishment of their hopes.

Amroo quitted them about midnight, and in the morning he reached the waters of Howazin; and as soon as King Zoheir saw him, he recognized him. Father, this is my uncle, said Cais; he is hastening towards us; I am convinced he is a spy from the tribe of Aamir.

And before Cais had finished, Amroo arrived, and congratulated King Zoheir on his pilgrimage: he then repaired to his sister, and saluting her, seated himself. O uncle, said Cais, what has brought you here?—I am come on a visit to you, said Amroo, and to congratulate you on your pilgrimage. I have also some news for you; which is, that Khalid son of Giafer, on his return from Mecca, assembled all the Aamirite chieftains, and related to them what happened with your father at the sacred shrine: he wept torrents of tears before them: revenge and rage rose in tumults in their hearts, and they have combined against your wicked and iniquitous designs. Unanimous in their resolution to waylay you on your return from the

sacred shrine, they marched out some days ago, and are five thousand in number. They heard of your having halted at the market of Ocadh; and out of my alarms for you I am come to congratulate you, and give you this information.

Well, Amroo, said King Zoheir, what have we to fear? We are able to meet our enemies; and if they have sent you as a spy, return and tell them that I will not move hence till I meet them and destroy them, high and low.—Great King, said Amroo, you still hate me; your detestation is not yet extinct. So I have lost my pains, though I was willing to make peace, and even my kindness to you is received as an act of baseness. I have only been induced to this deed by my fears for my sister, that she should be made captive, and infamy be heaped on me, east and west: but now that I have seen her my heart is at ease, and if I again return to you pardon not my offence. He then moved towards his horse, in order to mount and return. Cais would not permit him to execute his purpose; but he sprung at him like a hissing serpent, and threw him under him, and secured his arms. Uncle, he cried, I will not let thee go from us, and I will not let thee escape out of our power, till we have passed over this country, and we approach our own land.—What is this, my son? said his mother. Why hast thou seized the person of thy uncle, and thus repaid him for his visit to us? O mother, said Cais, let me alone in this affair; do

not question me. I will not release him till he gives me the promise of God and his engagement that he will not mention us to any human being, and will not give any information of us either to man or woman.—My brother, said Temadthur, give the required promise to my son Cais. Upon this Amroo, having sworn and bound himself by oaths that for three days he would not mention any one of them, Cais untied the ropes, and granted him his liberty : but he requested of his sister Temadthur some provisions, to feed him till he reached home. She gave him some bread and milk, and he mounted his horse and departed.

As soon as Amroo was gone, and vanished among the sand-hills and the mountains, Zoheir turned towards his son, to rebuke him. What is this thou hast done with thy uncle? cried he; this is all through fear of death or the foe.—Yes, my father, said Cais; for when a wise man has an enemy, he sleeps not by night. His father's expressions convinced Cais that death was at hand; so he went out with the horsemen, and stationed himself on the look-out for the enemy.

But as to Amroo, he urged on his march incessantly till he reached the tribe of Aamir. They mounted, and met him; as also did Khalid, though he believed he should never see him again. And when he came up to him, he asked him how he was: he gave no answer; but turning aside towards some erak trees, he alighted beneath them, and

placed down on the ground before him the bottle that contained the milk. Amroo pointed to the trees with his hand, and thus addressed them: Thou form, that canst return no reply, and understandest not what is said, and canst not distinguish between right and wrong, truly I have been provided with milk from a hated tribe. I wish thou wouldst taste thereof, that no harm may come to me from drinking it. O my cousins, said Khalid, the man has fallen among the tribe: afraid of him, they have bound him by oaths that he will not speak of them, nor give any human being information of them: he has thus engaged himself by oath, and had it not been so, he could not have escaped from them. The wisest plan is for you to taste this milk, and try his food; if it be sweet, it is fresh milk, and Zoheir is near us; if it be sour, and the victuals tainted, then the party is distant in the barren wastes. Accordingly, some of the horsemen approached and drank of the milk, and it was fresh camels' milk. They informed Khalid: You have proved the fact, said he, and I am convinced Amroo only left them in the land of Howazin; and it is my advice that we march against them instantly. Let us seek them, and disperse ourselves over the desert in search of them; and if we fall upon them in this desert, we will bring down death and extinction upon them; and if we do not meet them, we will return to the high road, where we must find them halting somewhere to repose.

Thus Khalid formed his plans for the execution of his purpose, and urged on over the plains and wastes till it was night; when they returned to the high road, and continued their march till they reached the waters of Howazin by morning.

Cais was stationed as the scout; and as soon as he saw the dust of the tribe as it drew nigh, he returned to his father. Be on your guard, O father, he cried, for there approaches what you cannot overcome.—What is the matter? said Zoheir. The dust of the foe is at hand, said Cais; there is the tribe of Aamir, and Khalid son of Giafer: and his tears burst forth in torrents as he spoke. But his father mounted his horse, having first clothed himself in armour, to meet his foes and his enemies. Welcome, welcome to Khalid, the son of Giafer the Aamirite, he cried, and galloped forward on his horse Caasa, followed by his sons and his troops.

When Khalid saw this formidable array, he called out to the tribe of Aamir, and excited their energies for the stroke of the cleaving swords. Upon this, shouts were raised, swords were drawn, spears were extended; all shouted, and attacked, and exclaimed, and vociferated. Fury boiled in every bosom; patience and perseverance were evinced by all. The scene was dreadful; multitudes crowded promiscuously; discourse was at an end. The cowards fled; round them revolved the cup of perdition. The dust thickened like clouds. Zoheir roared and bellowed: he gave vent to all his feelings,

and poured forth his fury and his pride : he assailed them, and exposed himself to dangers. But before mid-day the Aamirites resolved on flight, for they saw in the Absians what amazed their senses. Not one of the Aamirites could stand firm in that terrific hour but the Chief Khalid, son of Giafer; for he preferred death to flight.

At that moment arrived another division of the tribe of Aamir, every one of them eager for the battle; and as soon as they appeared their hearts were comforted, and they attacked: for among them were Knights whose equals the age could not produce, Rebia, son of Ocail, and Jandah, son of Beka, and their companions were the champions of the tribes. Upon this, they made an assault from every direction; their shouts arose on high; numbers increased against the Absians, whose difficulties augmented; patience and perseverance were exhausted, for they did not consist of more than one hundred men, and their enemies were five thousand warriors, all armed with spears.

But King Zoheir, when he was aware that there was no reprieve from death, and evidently beheld his destruction, resolutely encountered the barbs of the spears that goaded him on all sides; and he made assaults such as after ages never witnessed. Khalid marked his exploits, and threw himself upon him, anxious for a personal contest; at the same time thinking that though he might kill him, he should also be slain himself. They shouted and

roared aloud till they distinguished death and an eternal blindness; the earth and sky vanished from them.

Heaven protect us from the unenlightened persons of that period of Arabian ignorance, particularly from such as these two warriors renowned in battle, namely, King Zoheir, and Khalid, son of Giafer!

They continued now to close, now to start asunder; and a combat and contest arose between them that would have turned infants gray. They persisted in driving at each other till their spears were shivered: they flung them on the ground, and drew their swords: they did not desist from smiting each other with their sabres till their arms were quite exhausted. Throwing these likewise away, they grasped each other on their horses till their wrists were quite numbed, and continued in this position till they both fell at once on the sand; but Khalid fell uppermost, upon King Zoheir, on account of his arrogant speech at Mecca.

Khalid attempted to draw his sword, but he could not quit the hold of his antagonist; upon which King Zoheir cried out to the Absians, Come to me, and assist me against Khalid; and if ye cannot succeed against him, then slay him and slay me too. At that moment his son Warca stood near him, and the instant he heard his father call out, being beneath Khalid, O my father! he exclaimed, and he threw himself towards him, and dispersing

the Aamirites, struck Khalid a blow on the shoulder. But the sword turned round in his hand, and slipped aside, and he could not relieve his father from the power and oppression of the foe. Then came up Jandah, son of Beka, and heaved up his arm with his sword, and struck King Zoheir on the crown of the head; and his brains dropped out from his head, for the blow fell right against his temples: he heard his sword grate and rattle against Zoheir's skull. Convinced that the blow had made its way into Zoheir, and had slain him, Arise now, my cousin, he cried to Khalid, for it is all over with him; and Khalid sprung up off his chest, and his project was completed. He seated himself again on his horse's back, as he cried out to his cousins and troops, saying, O my cousins, retire from these dastards, for my purpose has succeeded, and God has listened to my prayer.—What has this to do with us? said Rebia, son of Ocail. I swore to Amroo, said Khalid, by him who hath spread out the earth and the canopy of the skies, that I would not take his sister Temadhur captive, and that I would not slay one of her sons; and now that we have accomplished our designs against Zoheir, I wish to fulfil my promise and engagement with Amroo. Thus commanding his horsemen to withdraw their hands from the blow and the thrust, he departed, seeking his family and home, having first taken possession of King Zoheir's sword, Zinoor, and his charger, Caasa; and as they were traversing the plain and the waste, Khalid turned towards Jandah,

and said, Well then, the blow you struck Zoheir was mortal? Eh! for I have sworn by the sacred shrine, that if we met we should not part but in death.—I struck him such a blow, said Jandah, were even assistance to come from Hibel for him, never will he revive to snuff the air of heaven; for my arm is powerful, and my sword sharp; it would cleave even iron. And when I heard the rattle and grating of my sword against Zoheir's skull, something issued like the oil of jessamin. I tasted it with my tongue, and I perceived it salt, so I was convinced it was the juice of his brains, and that his career was closed. Upon that Khalid smiled, and thanked him for his deed.

But as to King Zoheir's sons and his people, when they knew of his death, they feared for their own destruction: they gave their horses their heads, and fled away, till all pursuit being cut off, they halted. And as they expressed their regrets for King Zoheir, said Cais to his uncles and brothers, Return with me to my father, that we may carry him away with us; for if there is a breath of life, we will cure him, and if he is dead, we will dig a grave for him, and bury him; for the enemy has given us up, and something has called away their attention from us.

He accordingly returned with them to his father, whom they found in agonies. He dismounted, and spoke to him: he opened his eyes. What dost thou want of me, my son? said he, in a faltering voice;

depart, for thou art my successor, and only seek to avenge me on Khalid, son of Giafer; there is no occasion for me to recommend to thee thy cousin Antar. With this last injunction he again fainted. All present burst into tears and lamentations; they let loose their turbans about their necks. Their clamorous grief recalled Zoheir to life. Shall we not carry thee home with us? said Cais. No, said he; do not move me, my son. Trouble not thyself, for the blow on my head has inflicted its death on my heart, and I must inevitably die. A corpse is but dust; only just let it be concealed from the wild beasts and the wolves. Here his speech failed, and he expired.

So they dug a grave for him, and having buried his dust therein, they returned home, their tears streaming copiously. But Warca was more grieved and afflicted than any one, and his mind was in the greatest agony on account of his blow at Khalid, when the sword turned round in his hand, for he knew the Arabs would shame him on account of such a blow. He evidently wished for death in the excess of his anguish and the calamity he endured, and he thus mourned his father:

“ I beheld my father under the breast of Khalid,
“ and all my happy prospect died in him. He cried
“ out to us—O by Abs, turn towards me, for my
“ eyes are overpowered by Khalid. I rushed upon
“ him, and the horse shook their quivering spears,
“ and death closed up every passage. But my

“ sword turned round in my hand and betrayed
“ me, and the God of heaven's canopy palsied my
“ hand and my arm: O that before I had struck at
“ Khalid I had drunk the cup of the poison of
“ venomous beasts! O that before I rushed on,
“ the pangs of death had seized me in the contest!
“ My mother Temadhur will not be congratulated,
“ as she was once congratulated by illustrious heroes
“ at my birth. She indeed depended on me, and
“ she prayed for my success; but her hopes have
“ been disappointed in the hour of tribulation. I
“ am become a common tale, after this blow at
“ Khalid; I shall be spurned by foes and enemies.
“ O that I had been laid low in the dark desert,
“ and that the birds were devouring me! O son of
“ Giafer, may the God of the canopy make thee
“ drink of the cup of extinction, and of death, hot
“ and cold! May the Omnipotent God, the uni-
“ versal Ruler, destroy thee, and mayest thou feel
“ the direst evils of fortune, O Khalid! Soon ye
“ shall see horsemen brandishing death on their
“ spears and their arms. Alas! O tribe of Abs and
“ Adnan, rush to the fight, and come to me with
“ your illustrious heroes. O Absian Antar, Cham-
“ pion of the tribe, thou sympathisest with them
“ in the hour of battle and adversities. Come on,
“ O tribe, to revenge; haste—for the foe and our
“ rivals have triumphed over us. May the Lord
“ steep their land in blood; may it be a den of lions,
“ and may the birds never fly over it! The enemy

“reposes on the couch of gratulation in the murder
“of Zoheir, and Khalid's heart is exulting. Alas!
“O my cousins, rush on to the sea of death with
“your spears and your arms. Let us slay every
“one of their chiefs; let us take their women cap-
“tives in fetters and chains; let us destroy the Ke-
“labians, with the tribes of Ghani and Aamir; and
“let us extirpate a thousand knights for one. Alas!
“alas! how the foe laid him low; and the hand of
“the antagonist and the hater has stretched him on
“the ground. My dependance was on him: I even
“thought fortune feared his might, and would de-
“mand pardon of him in adversities. Oh! I shall
“weep for him as long as I live with ulcerated eyes,
“whose lids no rest shall visit. Since it is my doom
“to be cast down in misery, I will mourn in flowing
“tears that shall never be stayed.”

Then, as they pursued their journey homewards, Temadhur dashed her fists against her cheeks, ever casting her eyes behind her: she anxiously wished to destroy herself, yet her better reason checked her, for she was one of the most sensible of women: still she was reduced to misery and ignominy. But as to the tribe of Aamir, when they reached their own country, the Brandisher of Spears came forth with his suite to meet Khalid, saluting him, and inquiring about all that had passed. Khalid informed him of the victory and triumph, at which the Brandisher of Spears was happy and delighted, until he heard of the safety of King Zoheir's sons, at which

he was grieved and distressed. O Khalid, said he, what thou hast done is wrong; had I been with thee, by the faith of an Arab, I would not have left a head or tail of them; for when a man undertakes an affair, he should finish it, and should not leave any thing to be done.

Cousin, said Khalid, I was afraid the same misfortune would befall me as King Zoheir. But now, he added, I wish you would execute an act that will make you renowned indeed. Take with you one thousand horsemen, and proceed to the defiles between us and Yemen: conceal yourself there till Antar returns, and do with him as I have already done with Zoheir, for I have heard that Antar is in the land of Yemen, and with him a party of horse that despise the calamities of the times. If you can slay them, we shall succeed in all our attempts, and by killing them, we shall destroy the strong defence of the Absians.

When Gheshm heard Khalid's advice, his pride and vanity were shocked, and he was greatly annoyed, for he was a puissant horseman, and a stout hardy warrior. Hast thou not found for me any greater honour, said he to Khalid, than to detach me against a baseborn slave? Let me protect our property and families. I will assemble for them the troops and the heroes; go thou thyself on this expedition thou hast planned, and relieve me from the life of Antar. He then despatched horsemen in every direction, and ordered every one to as-

semble who had blood or vengeance against the Absians. In three days Khalid had equipped one thousand brave horsemen, amongst whom were Jandah and Rebia, son of Ocail, with whom he set out towards the defiles, saying to his cousins, We are engaged in an affair whose knot cannot be well tied, till we have completed it, and have executed the most difficult part of it. We have indeed cut off the serpent's head, but the tail remains.

The defiles where Khalid was going were on the road by which every traveller must pass, and the Arabs called them the defiles of Mesarih. Khalid had taken to himself King Zoheir's horse Caasa, and made it his own charger, and also his sword Zeenoor. They continued their march till they reached the defiles, where he halted with his party in the meadows and ravines. Now, as to Aboolfawaris Antar, he set out with Asyed and his son Nazih, as we before mentioned, and entered the land of Yemen, in order to rescue Selma, Asyed's wife, and to assist his son Nazih with respect to Dhymia, the daughter of Obad. They continued traversing the wastes till they came nigh unto the land of the tribe of Cayan. But Nazih perceiving on a sudden birds flying about and scimitars flashing, shouts and battles, and armies and camps, Alas! said he to his comrades, we have fallen on what we did not expect. Compose your heart and brighten your eye, said Antar; proceed on forward with your party, and ascertain what is the matter,

that we may take measures accordingly. Nazih slackened his bridle, and galloped up to the tents of the tribe of Cayan, where were the women in the greatest affliction, and the young damsels in tears. He beheld his chief Obad, and he was one mass of wounds. Dhymia was weeping among the women, and still exciting the horsemen to the combat, and rallying the troops to face the contest. At the sight of his mother Selma, he was quite distracted, as she was crying out: O my son Nazih, from what quarter can I call thee? and in what land shall I meet thee? Congratulate yourself, exclaimed Nazih, advancing towards Obad, victory and conquest are at hand; but what's this misfortune? O my son, he replied, are we involved in this calamity, and you among the living still? Where have you been, and what has happened to you and to your comrades? O my lord, said Nazih, mine is too long a tale to relate now; but inform me what has happened to you, and congratulate yourself on the fulfilment of every hope. For with me are horsemen, were they to assault the ocean, they would disperse its waves; were they to strike the mountains, they would rend open their sides. But who are these foes? O my son, said Obad, after your departure from hence, Nacmah, son of Ashter, King of the land of Sawdah and the mountain of Ghemam, sent and demanded my daughter Dhymia in marriage, but I refused her, and rejected his suit, sending back his messenger in despair. He repeated his offer, but I still denied

him, till his rage and indignation became excessive, and he ordered against me his armies, with his son Kelboon, and a contest took place between us.

Nazih listened, and the light became dark in his eyes; he hastened back to Antar, and told him what had happened. But Antar soothed his heart, and dividing his troops into three bodies, ordered them to make a general assault. Oorwah and his men he stationed on the right, and Nazih and a hundred men to the left, and he himself stood with a hundred horsemen in the centre. Asyed also stopped on a rising ground with ten horsemen, resolved also to fight; but Antar would not permit him: This is not right, said he, think not of exposing yourself among this tribe of dogs; stand firm at your post with this standard, that our foes may know we have also a knight-chief. Antar shouted out to the Absians, and leading the attack, thus expressed himself:

“ When the dawn shines from the east, and the
“ birds sing and mourn on the entangled trees, my
“ sword flutters in my scabbard, and cries out that
“ it longs for the contest. My spear quivers when it
“ sees the experienced warriors brandish their lances.
“ My horse aids me on the day of the spear-thrust;
“ when it moves, the winds even are dead. Behold
“ a true-hearted warrior, when the horsemen see him
“ they fling away their arms. O cup-bearer of death,
“ prepare the glass for us, for I am resolved on de-
“ parture. Give us to drink nought but the drops

“of blood, when the people drink of water and
“wine! Let the skulls be our apples, and spears
“in the battle our fragrant flowers! Sing to my
“distracted heart of my love for the beauteous Ibla,
“adorned with jewels. Be patient under the dark
“shadows of the battle and the harsh din of the
“combat, if thou art enamoured of lovely woman.
“I am Antar, like the lion of the tomb, I destroy
“enemies with the blow of my scimitar!”

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, he received the whole tribe of Arcat as the parched earth receives the first of the rain, with blows that would cleave a rock, and blind the vision, and stupefy the senses. The tribe of Arcat was the most potent of all the tribes of the land of Yemen, so also was their king pre-eminent above all the kings of those regions, the most arrogant and most powerful of all their ignorant and blasphemous race; addicted to debauchery among the maidens and the matrons of Arabia, for whom beldams in his employment searched amongst the tribes, and whenever they happened to find a beautiful maiden or lovely damsel, they came to him and informed him; then would he send to her father to demand her in marriage, and if her father assented, it was all well; but if he refused, Nacmah would mount against him with his armies and his bravoës, and would subdue him with the sword-blow and the spear-thrusts, and seizing her by force, he would keep her as his slave, till he should hear of some other, when he would

make her over to his servants, and take another, with whom he would act as with the first. About this time he heard of the beauty of Dhymia, the daughter of Obad, and he sent to make his proposals, as we mentioned. But Obad sent his messenger disappointed away, saying, I will not marry my daughter to an ignorant tyrant.

As soon as Nacmah heard this reply, he was in a violent rage. He forgot it for a short time, and repeated his message, but still Obad rejected him. Now, said Nacmah, I must reduce him to disgrace, and subdue him by force, and he instantly sent for his son, whose name was Kelboon, a brave man, and a sturdy warrior; him he ordered to mount, and proceed against the tribe of Cayan, and bring with him his beloved Dhymia. His son Kelboon obeyed his orders and mounted, speeding to the tribe of Cayan; when he arrived, he attacked them without any excuse, or previous notice, or explanation: for the tribe of Arcat acknowledged no law or compact; they worshipped the moon, and prostrated themselves before it when new, and when at the full, at its renewal, and its completion; and on the fourteenth night they demanded of it all their wants and exigencies, renouncing him who spread out the earth and raised up the skies. In every month they had a festival, and they rejoiced at the rise of the new moon. Kelboon plied among the tribe of Cayan the blow of the deadly sword without any cause assigned, or previous warning. The

carnage lasted three days; but on the fourth day arrived Antar, and Nazih, and Asyed, and found the tribe of Cayan reduced to great straits and difficulties, all huddled together in their tents, and disasters were falling heavy on them.

Antar divided his troops into three corps: they rushed upon the encampment, and trampled down the foe from every quarter; for Antar's rage and fury were at their height. He shouted at the horsemen of Arcat—he dispersed them—he drowned them in their own blood—he mangled the foe as he cut through them—he gored their breasts with his spear—he crushed their ribs—he dragged forth their lives—he spoiled them of their existence—he dyed their carcasses in blood, and painted them with gore—he dashed down their skulls, and tossed them about—he vociferated at the foe, and the Ab-sians answered to his shout. The enemy were only anxious to escape by flight, for the tribe of Arcat saw death was come upon them, and they fled. Antar's yell was heard again, and the whole country was in convulsions. Then retreated the tribe of Arcat from the tents, as they still saw horsemen gathering upon them, and warriors assailing them: back they turned, but death was ever before their eyes. They dispersed like wild beasts, every one felt the certainty of his fate; to every one this truth was unquestionably manifested.

Their Chief Kelboon was stationed beyond the field of battle and carnage, and with him a body of

warriors. He was expecting the prisoners to be brought to him, for he had seen the party of Ab-sians when they attacked and plunged into the fight, but he despised them on account of their inferior numbers. He knew not they were the horsemen of fate, and of instant death. But when he perceived his comrades scattered right and left, he shuddered, crying out at them, What means this abandonment of the contest? He himself then attacked the Ab-sians, and he found in them warriors who regarded not wealth, who wished not for life, who never thought of flight, who feared not the storm of fire, but whose assault was like the assault of hungry lions, and whose spear-thrusts pierced the breasts and the ribs. Then was the calamity frightful, and awful the catastrophe. The arrows of destruction were sped, and the warriors shrunk away terrified at death, and at the circling cups of perdition, and the furious steeds of annihilation. Some rushed upon their fate, some sought safety in flight. They demanded succour of Kelboon. We advise you, cried they, to fly, before this knight comes down upon you, and tears off your head from your shoulders. He was highly indignant at such a suggestion, and sparks of fire shot from his eyes. He drew his sword, and smote his companions; five of them he slew. Eh! he cried, what is there more intolerable than this? How? what? can a thousand horsemen of Arcat fly from one hundred only, many of whom are slain too? By the truth of the rays of

the new moon and the full, and by the night when it is dark and obscure, I will show you what I will do with this horseman; and he darted from beneath the standards, and with him five hundred men, brave warriors, in whom he could confide, and every one almost his equal in skill at arms.

When Antar had eased his fury, and routed all that came before him, he turned towards his heroic Absians, and saw them fiercely engaged with two thousand horsemen: he was alarmed for his comrades, on account of those fellows who rolled on like the salt sea. He was also much afraid for Nazih, and these circumstances creating great disquietude in his mind, he sent them out of his hundred men thirty horsemen, and then galloped forward with the remaining seventy, to seek the King's son's standard, whom he observed hastening towards him, attended by his five hundred; and as he approached Antar; Advance, he cried to his people, towards this demon, and ask him of what Arab tribe he is. So they charged upon him; but one anticipated the rest, and he was a spear-armed warrior. What Arab art thou? cried he; whence comest thou, frantic as thou seemest? But Antar, though he heard this speech, condescended not to reply. He attacked him, and made at him; he pierced him through the chest, and hurled him over. He also slew the one who came up next, and again sent to join them a third brother, goring the remainder with thrusts in

their sides, till they retired on their rear, and hurried towards Kelboon to demand his assistance.

When Kelboon saw this dreadful event, he rushed upon Antar. He galloped, charged, and assaulted; soon laboured amongst them the blow, and the thrust from the sword and the spear. At this moment the thousand opposed to Nazih were routed, for Antar's reinforcement reached him in good time, and strengthened his courage and resolution. We have already mentioned all he felt in his heart for his dear Dhymia. So he scattered heads like balls, and hands like leaves of trees, and by mid-day he had dispersed them over the barren waste. Next were repulsed the troops that were opposed to Oorwah; they too were dispersed over the land, death and destruction came upon them.

Now then, cried Obad to his tribe, now congratulate yourselves on victory, in the arrival of your Knight Nazih, accompanied by this Absian party. Now turn again upon the foe with firm purpose, and protect your women from every foreign invader.

All the horsemen gave an universal shout, and the freeborn and the slaves attacked, and made great havoc and slaughter. The sword ceased not to act, nor blood to flow, nor men to fight, nor the flame of battle to rage, till the tribe of Arcat was completely cut up, when Nazih and his comrades sought the tents with Oorwah, where they were all crowded together; and thus they continued their

work of death. But Antar and Kelboon were occupied in the thrust, and the assault, and the skull-cleaving blow.

Antar, being anxious speedily to conclude this difficult affair, pretended being exhausted. This increased Kelboon's fury, and he thrust at him with his spear, in the hope of annihilating him. Antar waited patiently till the spear came close to his chest, when he shivered it with his sword, and rushing upon Kelboon, struck him on the side of the neck, and his sword issued quivering through the joints. Upon this the tribe of Arcat assailed Antar from all sides, shouting, Alas ! alas ! Kelboon ! But Antar also cried out to his men, and he encountered them, piercing their chests and their eyes, and making their blood stream down with his spear. Asyed perceived him ; the pride of glory was roused in him ; his joy and delight were complete, and seeing that the business was now rendered easy, he attacked with the remaining horsemen, and plunged among the foe with his sword and spear. Now fled the tribe of Arcat, and Antar in pursuit like an overwhelming destruction, the blood trickling from his scimitar and lance.

Shiboob caught up the head of Kelboon, and stuck it on a tall spear, and ran on till he came near the tribe of Arcat. For whom would ye now remain to fight ? he exclaimed ; Behold the head of your Chief Kelboon ! With that he mounted the head on high towards them, and when they recog-

nised it they dispersed over the wastes and the wilds. And God made security succeed to fears with the tribe of Cayan. They all dismounted before Antar, and walked towards him. Nazih also dismounted, and pressed Obad to mount, but he refused, saying, O my son, who are these noble people? My Lord, said Nazih, these are of the tribe of Abs, whom the Arabs call the Knights of death and instant destruction, and the cause of my acquaintance with them is an extraordinary event; for their Prince is my father, and their parentage is mine.

Thus he related to him all that had happened to him on his expedition. Obad was exceedingly surprised: By the faith of an Arab, said he, this is indeed a story unequalled in the world; and truly I hated the Absians on account of what my father told me of them, but now, my son, it is incumbent on us that our men become their slaves, and our women their handmaidens; but which of them is your father? Nazih pointed to Asyed—he who has the standard over his head, he replied; the lord of the embroidered robe. Obad ran eagerly up to Asyed, and kissed his foot in the stirrup: Had I known this youth, who is among us, I would have made him lord over the tribe of Cayan; but He who is unseen is wonderful, and is the Author of all things. You alone deserve well of me and my companions, replied Asyed, kissing his head, and we must partake in all your disgraces and your honours; and had we done for you two-fold of what we have

effected, we could not have requited you for your acts in educating my son among the Arabs; but we request of you to marry him to your daughter Dhymia, that we may be allied and connected, for you are an eminent chieftain, and we are the princes of the Arabs; and all of us are men of high renown and degree. One like me, returned Obad, expressing his obedience, must be honoured with such good fortune. Asyed thanked him.

Now when they came nigh to the dwellings, the women and slaves met them. Nazih's mother had heard of her son's return, and observed him engaged with the enemy. She could scarcely believe he was come back. She kissed him, and inquired how he was. He acquainted her with his having discovered his father. The Almighty God has restored him to us; a tribe of Absians is come with me, and it is by them that this affliction has been removed. Then was her joy increased, and all sorrow and grief were dead within her heart. She looked upon her husband Asyed, and immediately recognising him, she walked up to him, and tendered her services; and when he saw her, he dismounted and embraced her. Every one of them was now united to his friends; they wept and talked over the horrors they had endured, and wept again.

Before evening the tribe of Abs had pitched their tents, and wine and meat were served up to them. The tribe of Cayan treated them very hospitably, and in the morning some slaves came from Obad to

Asyed with generous steeds, and horses, and spears, and scimitars; he also sent to Nazih's mother fifty party-coloured robes, and also fifty maidens, bearing valuable jewels in their hands; and before the day was passed and the night came on in obscurity, Nazih's mother had absolute command over the tribe of Cayan, after all the afflictions and ignominy she had suffered among them. Soon after Asyed prepared a magnificent entertainment, and assembled all the tribe and families. The tribes of Abs and Cayan made obeisance to Antar, and thanked him for what he had done present or absent. The feast lasted three days, and then Asyed requested Obad to marry his daughter to his son; he assented. My daughter will indeed execute her part, said he, but my heart is under severe apprehensions on account of this tyrant whose son you have slain; for I am well aware the flame will not be quenched in him, and he will not submit; and as soon as the fugitives arrive, and notify his son's death, he will march against us with incalculable numbers, for his armies are like the seas, and his country is the most savage of countries; and if he comes he will leave our habitations a desert wild. O Obad, said Antar, we will not quit this country till we have bound this tyrant by the neck for you, and I will make every one in the whole country subject to you. So enjoy your present happiness, and let it not be tainted with sorrow, whilst I go with one hundred men and annihilate Nacmah, son of Ashter, for not one will

I leave alive of his tribe. O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed Obad, in amazement at Antar's expressions, these are not like the people you have hitherto engaged; their country is most extensive, and they are as numerous as the sands. I had better write to my confederates. Let us all march together to the mountain of the Volcano; there let us exert our endeavours to extirpate this monster; for if he demands the ransom of his son, he must prevail. What say you, Obad? said Antar: by the truth of Him who created mankind, and infused life into our bodies, I will not march but with two hundred horsemen of the tribe of Carad, and no one shall accompany me but Oorwah and my father Shedad, let them be as numerous as Themood and Aad. Heaven protect us! ejaculated Asyed and Obad. At such imprecations they were stupefied, and no one could venture a reply. At last, said Asyed, O knight of the age, verily thou hast sworn by an oath that was not required; and if indeed we are able to accomplish this, we will not acquiesce in thy proposal. But, O my cousin, if it must be so, let it be; do as thou wilt; march to-morrow, and we will join thee in two or three days, for we cannot permit thee to enter a country of which thou art ignorant with this small body. It is for thee to command, said Antar, but I had much rather execute this business without them; and I trust you will not join me till I have performed my engagement. This passed in the evening, and the people retired to their

tents. As soon as the darkness had passed away, Antar sent Shiboob for his father Sheclad, and Oorwah, and selecting from the Absians two hundred horsemen, he bade adieu to Asyed and Nazih, traversing the plains and the deserts ; and when Antar was alone, he thought of Ibla. It was now a long time that he had not seen her in his sleep, at which he was nearly dead through grief ; he was exceedingly distressed, and in his passion he thus spoke :

“ My virtues are enemies to the world, and my
“ actions are faults and disgraces. My lot is eternal
“ separation from my love, but the lot of others is
“ to approach her. Every day the world renews its
“ reproaches on account of my fondness, and I have
“ no physician for my body. The world is enamoured
“ of my mistress, as if I were its rival. If my ima-
“ gination, O Ibla, has deceived me, let my heart
“ die insulted, for death is sweeter to me than life,
“ when it is my beloved that oppresses me. How
“ can I go or pass the deserts, when the west and the
“ south winds contend to check me ? O breeze of
“ Hidjaz, if thou dost not quench the fire of my
“ heart, my frame must melt with the heat. Truly
“ the dove mourns on the bough, and its plaints
“ and murmurs distress me ; it remains wailing its
“ separation from its mate, and laments itself as a
“ lonely stranger. But I pour forth sighs from my
“ burthened heart, that even the most wretched cries
“ at it, ‘ Heaven protect me !’ O dove of the bough,
“ if thou wert like me, thou wouldst not rest under

“the green branches. Leave their love and passion
 “for the real lover, whose heart is ever in torment,
 “whom fortune punishes every day, when any one
 “addresses him. O anguish interminable! O cala-
 “mity that will never cease! Ask the herald con-
 “cerning me. O Ibla, ask the brave man, grown
 “gray in battle. He will tell thee, that on the edge
 “of my sword sits the king of death, ever present
 “and never absent. My spear, on the day of thrusts,
 “knows me. Ask it then, what will joy thy heart,
 “how many warriors approached me, each crying
 “out, O by my tribe, I am a noble hero! but he
 “never returned, but he bit the ground, and his
 “garments were rent from him. My sword laughs
 “in my hand, but in another’s grasp it would weep.
 “In the dark shadow of my spear is my parentage;
 “and my black complexion, when it is questioned,
 “gives the reply. It protects me in the day of spear-
 “thrusts, as one noble-born defends his fellow. They
 “forbid me from drinking cups of wine, with damsels
 “scented with musk and perfumes; they compel
 “me to hold up the skirt of glory, what even the
 “contemptible coward would renounce.”

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, his
 father’s heart pitied him, and compassionated his
 situation, and so also did Oorwah and his people.
 They urged on their march, till they reached the
 land of the tribe of Arcat. As to Nacmah, after he
 had despatched his son, Kelboon, he remained ex-
 pecting news of him, and hoping that he would soon

return with Dhymia, Obad's daughter, but he was not aware that fortune had belied her former habits with him, and had, instead of her, sent Antar. Thus it continued with him, till the fugitives arrived and announced his son's death. Accursed ! ye wretches ! he roared out, ye went with seven thousand horsemen, and has this calamity befallen you at the hands of the tribe of Cayan ? And have ye left my son dead on the desert ? My lord, one named Masrook ventured to say, by your life, this did not come upon us from the tribe of Cayan. We had nearly effected their destruction, and had driven them to their tents, but three hundred horsemen of Hidjaz rushed upon us, on whose spears sat death, and with them was a black knight like a thunder-cloud ; he understood no address ; he made no reply ; but he thrust his spear through chests and ribs ; he wrenched out eyes, tore out entrails, and repelled affliction from the tribe of Cayan, and he gored us in our rear, till he drove us far away, and I should say that he was even now at our heels. Nacmah permitted him not to finish his tale, before he smote him with his sword, and off flew his head. Bring before me these fugitives, he cried to his attendants, and they accordingly seized them, and dragged them before him, and he struck off their heads till the strength of both his arms was exhausted. Now he had a brother whose name was Niamet, and when he saw his brother's outrageous conduct, he advanced towards him ; he took the sword out of his hand,

and calmed his rage and fury. This Niamet was the reverse of his brother, he was a kind-hearted man, and one to whom people referred in their troubles; hating oppression and violence. He was ever checking his brother, and requesting him to abstain from his hateful acts towards his people, and to be just to his subjects, warning him of the consequences. But Nacmah would never listen to his discourse, and would not even deign an answer; and on this day, when he prevented him from slaying his companion, and took the sword out of his hand, saying, How oft have I checked you, and you still indulge in this fury? And now fortune has struck you with affliction, with respect to your son Kelboon"—Nacmah was confounded with horror, and his eyeballs started into the crown of his head; every one that saw him shuddered. Well, how oft wilt thou reprove me for my actions, cried he to his brother, and oppose the accomplishment of my desires? I am the king of the universe, and I will indulge the lust of my heart; if thou darest again to come into my sight, I will despoil thee of thy life, and I will strike off thy head. Upon this, Niamet mounted his horse and went home, and his heart was full of grief at what had happened with his brother. In that quarter, he had with him three thousand heroes, the best of the tribe, all obeying his orders, and detesting his brother Nacmah, on account of his insolent pride. As soon as Niamet returned to them, he told them what his brother had done to him, and

how he had struck off the heads of the fugitives. Never return to him, cried they all, highly incensed; raise not up your head to him again, consider him no longer as a human being. I must, said Niamet, destroy this monster. I will depart into the interior, and will collect all the Arabs whose daughters he has seized, and will excite the horsemen against him, and I will not desist till I have destroyed him, and I am relieved from this infamy and contempt. First of all, I will try these Absians who slew his son Kelboon; for I have heard they have a knight as good as a thousand, and that the warriors of the earth cannot stand before him, and I will ask their aid against this dæmon. It is expedient that you let us march this very night, said one, and let it not be morning before we have traversed the wastes and the wilds. He instantly ordered his slaves to move off; he struck his tents, and so did his cousins, and it was not night before they were all on horseback, and were traversing the deserts under the shades of darkness.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BUT as to Nacmah, son of Ashtar, I will positively exterminate the whole tribe of Cayan, cried he to his people, I will sacrifice their women and their children; then will I march into the land of Hidjaz, and put to the sword the tribe of Abs, who have slain my son. He reposed till day dawned, when he sent to the tribes of Riyah, and Sabah, Washah, and Atbool, and Barik, and Shamrack, and ordered them to march with all expedition; for these tribes were subject to him, and feared his cruelty. Their residences were round the mountain of volcano, and all had adopted the worship of the Moon. This mountain was one of the phenomena of the All-merciful Lord, for there incessantly issued from it something like a black cloud, and whenever the new moon rose, from this mountain burst forth groans, and sparks of fire flew forth. It was a black mountain, and no one was able to ascend it, and iron could not have any effect on its stony sides. An historian has noticed it, saying, The Lord God has been angry with this mountain, ever since he created the world at first, and at the consum-

mation it will be the stone-work of hell. In one of my excursions I ascended it, and I saw within it terrific wonders; its summit is divided in two, and in the centre is a sea of fire, that never subsides, but day and night it rolls in waves of flame, and on it are angels of wrath, and stern enormous monsters, that are never weary, but are continually stationed for its punishment by the will of the omnipotent God. But let us return to our story, and to Nacmah. As soon as the tribes came to him, he was also informed that his brother had marched away with his property, in order to assemble the Arabs against him; And he will, they said, conduct against you the tribes from the surrounding regions, and will requite you for your contemptuous conduct towards him. Ah! I am foiled, cried Nacmah, for I should have cut off his head, and thus I should have been at ease; but I will pursue him, and put to the sword all his companions. He instantly ordered his slaves to proclaim the march, and early in the forenoon all the tribes had mounted, as well his allies as his attendants, and he ordered them to pursue his brother and his companions, directing them to take a vast supply of horses, and arms, and armour, and coats of mail, and before mid-day they had quitted the land, and they continued traversing the wastes and wilds in their march, till next day at sunrise, when they distinctly saw ahead of them a black dust. Behold

how fortune favours us, cried they all. Niamet was in company with his associates on the march, and when they were distant from home, and nigh unto the plains of Khidret, and the fountains of Hywan, he considered himself as secure. It was thus, when, on a sudden, arose the shouts in his rear, and the whole country was in agitation. He gazed attentively, and perceived the camp, and the troops and horsemen galloping over the desert, and various corps that cut off all communication, and every road. Niamet was certain his brother had overtaken him. O my cousins, said he, here is my brother, who has overtaken us, and our hostility has been discovered. I request of you to make some proper arrangement, and let no one call me 'Chief.' Comfort your heart, and brighten your eyes, said they, for there is not one of us that will shrink from the fight; every one of us will engage with the scimitar, and defend his wife and family. Then shaking their spears, they advanced to the battle and the contest, and at that moment approached Antar, son of Shedad. He beheld armies that filled the desert; he was exceedingly astonished. Gain some intelligence for us about these bold armies, cried he to Shiboob, for I perceive troops are preparing for battle.

Shiboob set his feet forward, and coming up with the companions of Niamet, O Arabs, he exclaimed, tell me what is your kindred, and what is your business?—What want you of us, young man?

asked Niamet himself; we are a tribe flying from a tyrant, and he is in our rear, seeking to destroy us, and capture our women. He is Nacmah, son of Ashtar; but you, who are ye? Explain to me, perhaps by your means this trouble may be removed from us.—Congratulate yourself, O Arab, replied Shiboob, on the annihilation of Nacmah, and the arrival of relief, for we are come purposely against him. We are those who slew his son Kelboon, and we are come to send him to bear his son company, and pull down his dwellings over his head; but as to your question about our parentage, we are a tribe from the land of Hidjaz.

On hearing this, joy infused itself into the heart of Niamet, and he felt assured all his troubles would be satisfactorily settled. O my brother, said he to Shiboob, were it not for these troops that have overtaken us, I would go with you to pay my respects to your companions; but the time presses upon us. Return to your party, and relate what you have heard, and assure them of wealth and success in their enterprise; and when he is slain, we will return home. Shiboob returned to Antar, and informed him of the news; much delighted, he said to his father Shedad, I am afraid there may be some plot against us; and when we are among the two parties, said he, it is possible they may turn upon us the troops on both sides.—We, said Shedad, shall not meet them, but with the firm

resolution to fight. My opinion is, you should attack their right, and we their left; probably we may thus terminate our labours, and return home.

Antar alone assaulted their right, Shiboob going ahead; and the troops of Niamet closed upon them, transfixing them with their spears. The armies were thronged together, and the flame of war blazed. Necks were cleft by the sword—armour was clotted with gore—hope itself became despair; chests were pierced with the spear, and souls fled from bodies; while skulls flew about on all sides, or were rolled along the plain. As soon as the black lion attacked, the renowned hero, the invincible warrior, the knight of the battle and contest, the serpent of the centre of the valley, the Chief Antar, son of Shedad—he alone burst through the right, though more than a thousand horsemen opposed him, and with his cleaving falchion he struck horror into their hearts. On that day Shiboob assisted him with his arrows: the troops again attempted an attack; he turned upon them, and dispersed them; and he did not desist from his assault till he scattered them over the desert, and filled the whole country with the dead. Thus also did Oorwah and his father Shedad, and the Absians; they completely destroyed the left by their terrible attacks. Niamet and his men observed their battle and their actions, and were astounded at their deeds, observing in

them what they could not comprehend. The battle continued to rage in every quarter till the armies of night came on, when the two hostile forces separated and dismounted.

Nacmah's troops retreated, for they were totally routed, and there was not one but talked of the tribe of Abs and their deeds. Eh! cried Nacmah, assembling his companions about him, with such hearts would ye wish to go with me into the land of Hidjaz, and encounter its heroes in the combat? Here one knight with three hundred men has overthrown you, and these stern fellows have annihilated you.—O Chief, said they, do not reproach us, for this day we saw, with your brother, horsemen, whom had we seen in a dream we should have been horror-struck: we know not whence they come. Perhaps you beheld the knight who attacked on the left, how he crushed it; how he roared out to the right, and dispersed it. If you blame us for this, you are no wise man. On hearing this, his rage became dreadful. I had resolved to attack them in person, he bellowed out, and with my single power to remove this evil from you; but I was afraid of shame and reproaches, for truly men of high dignity may scorn me on this account. But I must clear my honour now that this catastrophe has befallen us, and I will not endure the insults of living man. To-morrow I will disguise myself, and I will sally forth into the plain, and I will engage my-

self in fight, in the scene of the spear-thrusts; and for every one of that tribe I will slay another of you also, so that not one of you must retreat or quit the battle unless he be covered with wounds.

When his comrades heard this, they were alarmed for the fate that awaited them, and they remained expecting the daylight. But as to the Absians and Niamet's troop, the women and young damsels were in agonies of fear, alarmed for their husbands and chiefs, as soon as the tribe of Arcat approached them, and surrounded them on all sides. They continued weeping and lamenting, in dread of captivity and separation, till the moment they saw the Absians, and the deeds they performed, and how they environed the troops right and left. At this their hearts were composed, and they thanked the omniscient Creator. Niamet ordered his slaves to slaughter deer and sheep, and the women prepared the repast; and before evening the horsemen being returned to the tents, they took their food.

Antar, having mangled the right and left, went to his father Shedad, and Oorwah, and his men, and found them all safe from peril, for they only lost seven men: he congratulated the rest on their safety. Niamet advanced towards him, and saluting them all, received them with honour: he walked before them till they came to the tents, where he

made them dismount at their dwellings, among their wives and daughters. But Antar declined, and alighted with his party without their tents; so they supplied them with victuals, and Niamet stood amongst the slaves, to attend on them: but Antar perceiving him arose, and taking him by the hand, made him sit down by his side, saying, Do not so, young man; eat with us, and feel assured of success. Know that we entered this country for our own concerns only, and we did not come without reasonable grounds. And he gave him a full account of Nazih's adventure, at which Niamet was exceedingly surprised, remarking the wondrous changes of fortune. The tribe of Abs rose still higher in his estimation, and he said within himself, Doubtless these horsemen are the wonders of the Genii, for they have marched against my brother with these two hundred horsemen. Now, O Arab, said he to Antar, if you slay my brother, and complete my wishes, I will submit myself as a slave to the tribe of Cayan, and I will for ever live their servant. I consent that the country be yours, and all the wealth therein.—By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, I never in all my life took a bribe for an honourable action; and now we will only consider you as independent, and our friend, for our possessions are great, and our property abundant. But, by him who ordered us to make a pilgrimage to the sacred shrine, I must make thy brother drink

of the cup of death. By to-morrow's dawn I will assail him, and I will strike off his head from between his shoulders: I will make thee lord over all his property and possessions, and I will put to death his adherents and friends.

When they had finished their dinner, they hasted to repose; and as soon as the day arose in smiles, they hurried to the battle and the combat. Do you and your comrades, said Antar to Niamet, betake yourselves to the left, and leave us the right; and if you find yourselves unable to sustain the combat, retire from before them for a few steps only, so that the troops may pursue you, and rush with avidity among you: but when I look towards you, and you are engaged with them, I will sally out against them, and will plunder their souls. Niamet highly approved the plan: he separated towards the left, and quitted the Ab-sians.

When the tribe of Arcat saw this manœuvre, they were alarmed for Nacmah. O my cousins, cried Antar to his friends, know that this affair is a mere trifle; be assured of victory and conquest. Attack with me, that we may attempt the lord of the great standard, on which is the form of the moon, for King Nacmah is beneath it, and if we do not slay him we shall not succeed in our expectations.

Antar had scarcely finished when the foe attacked.

Then too the Knight of the swarthy Abs went to work, and fell among the enemy like inevitable fate. The battle commenced; the heroes stood firm against the spear-thrust and the sword-blow—the warriors turned upon each other—the men assaulted—all headed by Antar, the ravenous lion. The spear-barbs laboured on the backs of the tribe of Arcat like sparks of fire. Certain of death and destruction, they dispersed over the wastes. Nacmah sought out his brother in the battle, but the party met him like the waves of the ocean; fear and horror seized him, and he attempted to fly, when lo! Antar rushed against the standard-bearer, and piercing him through the heart, hurled him off his horse, and then made at Nacmah, to overwhelm him also in death. He fled, for he felt his death certain: still Antar drove at him, and smote him on the head with his sword; he cleft it even to the girdle of his garment. He poured destruction upon the tribe of Arcat, and let loose an overwhelming calamity upon them. In fine, every one that knew of the death of Nacmah immediately returned under allegiance to his brother Niamet, and sought his protection; and those who ran away at first fled home.

Before mid-day Niamet possessed a valiant army, and over his head waved the standards and ensigns. The whole camp came towards him, and marched before him till they reached the tribe of Abs.

Niamet was about to dismount, but Antar checked him, and kissed him between the eyes. Niamet kissed Antar's two hands, and extolling him, requested his protection; and peace was concluded between him and the Chief Obad, and terms were arranged.

And when they were about to proceed each to his country, Niamet turned towards Antar, saying, Aboolfawaris, I request you will do me a favour.—Speak your wishes, said Antar, and say what you want.—I swear, said Niamet, by the faith of an Arab, not an article of my property, great or small, that came with me, shall return with me: but do not reprove your slave for its inadequacy.—No, by the duty of an Arab, exclaimed Antar, not even a halter shall follow me of yours. But if you have any other enemy, tell me, that I may go against him, and extinguish his life, and may ease you of his iniquity.—Besides my brother, said Niamet, I have not a foe; and if I had, you ought to return home. So take some of my camels, that are unequalled in all lands; very patient they are in traversing the deserts, and they are not to be had in the land of Hidjaz. Upon this, two thousand she camels were put aside, all with large overlapping humps: they were given over to a hundred men and as many women slaves, who were ordered to drive them before Antar, son of Shedad, the Knight of the dust and the fight.

This done, Niamet and his subjects returned home, and Antar, with his comrades, set out for the land of the tribe of Cayan. That day they remained in the desert, and the next till mid-day; when lo! there arose a dust ahead of them, and they discovered the tribe of Cayan, commanded by the Chief Nazih, and his father Asyed, and the Chief Obad. They advanced, and the heroes saluted each other. Obad came forward; he kissed Antar's hand, and inquired what had passed. Antar recounted the whole; at which the Arab chieftains were in amazement, and they returned to the dwellings of the tribe of Cayan.

About this time rose the moon of Redjib, which the Arabs held sacred, hostilities were checked: men and women were secure during that season. Arrived, they married Dhymia to Nazih, and they passed that month in feasts and entertainments. Asyed also took away his wife, and soon they set out on their way to their own country. Obad bade them adieu, and returned home with his troops, whilst Antar continued his march over the desert; and as his love and passion for Ibla seized him, he thus expressed himself:

“ I march, and in my heart is a flame and a fire,
“ and I point towards home in my eager love—I
“ languish for thee; so understand that I am weak,
“ and thoughts only are alive. I march over the
“ desert adoring her, and in my heart are hell-

“flames and fiery tortures. O Ibla, I have en-
“countered warriors, from the thrust of whose
“spears gushes out blood; but I have dispersed
“them with the spear-thrust, till I have left them
“to be dried up on the earth in the deserts. I have
“killed Kelboon before Nacmah, and I have aban-
“doned them as dried flesh on the ground. I die,
“and revive every day and night; for captive lovers
“there is no rescue. Fortune and time have fa-
“voured Nazih, a youth skilled in the spear-thrust,
“and tried in war. O mountain of volcano, ever
“be in hell-flames—ever be thy food the infernal
“fire! and thou, O Mount Saadi, mayst thou ever
“be my home, and mayst thou ever be moistened
“with rain; there is my home; in every hour I
“languish for it; there is my beloved, from whom
“no captive can break loose. But I have endured
“in patience this lengthened absence. May God
“now unite us! He alone is omnipotent!”

At hearing Antar's verses, there was not one but thanked him and praised him, and they travelled night and day till they came nigh unto the defiles of the passage where Khalid was concealed, and of which he had taken possession, in order to succeed in his attempts upon Antar, having stationed scouts and advanced posts. Antar arrived about night-fall, and halted by a lake on the Yemen side; as soon as the outposts saw his dust, they came to Khalid, and informed him. He was overjoyed;

but waiting till the night was quite darkened over, he sent out a slave to obtain intelligence. He departed, and returned about midnight, saying, It is the Absians, and with them is Antar: so prepare your companions for the battle and the combat. As to Antar, as soon as the men had rested, and the horses and camels had eaten their provender, he said to Shiboob, Order the slaves to load the baggage, and let us move.

Shiboob quitted him, and made the proclamation in conformity with his brother's orders, and in an hour the men were mounted, and the slaves had loaded the camels, and they set out over the country till they reached the defile. About an hour before daylight they stopped at the head of the pass, when the slaves were ordered to drive the cattle before them: so the he and she camels, and the howdahs, and the baggage, were driven forward, and entered the defile. As soon as Khalid saw this, and perceived the baggage-camels, and behind one hundred horsemen with Shiboob to protect them, letting them pass till Antar appeared with Shedad, and Asyed, and Nazih, he shouted to his comrades, and they assaulted in every direction, brandishing their barbed spears and their scimitars, and rushing upon them in the obscurity of darkness. The first that engaged Antar was Rebia, son of Ocail: he made a murderous thrust at Antar, but he grasped his cleaving Dhami, and striking the spear, clipped

it off; then aiming at him with his sword, he cut through his helm, and smote him on the crown of his head, depriving him of his senses, and before he could recover himself, Shiboob sprang upon him and bound him fast by the shoulders, and pinioned his arms and sides.

Jandah attacked Nazih, followed by his horsemen: they were all so crowded in the defile, and so thick rose the dust, that it was impossible to distinguish friend from foe. Rebia being secured, Antar vigilantly looked after himself, as he continued to pierce the chests of the heroes. But Shiboob, when he had bound fast Rebia, returned to seek for Jandah: he had almost overpowered Nazih, when Shiboob met him, and struck his horse with an arrow: he threw him off, and Jandah being hurled over from his height, Nazih was about to dismount, but Shiboob anticipated him, saying, Do not trouble yourself, O Chief; do not dismount, for the game belongs to him who first struck it down, and besides I understand such business much better than you. So saying, he ran up to him and tied down his arms.

The Absians then came on, issuing from the defile. They extended their spears, and the battle and the contest grew fiercer: their bodies were covered with wounds, and blood streamed over the sands. Antar slew of the tribe of Aamir those whose death was at hand, and whose departure was ordained.

Khalid observed the defeat, and repented of what he had done; but they continued the engagement till the day dawned, when the tribe of Aamir being completely discomfited, took to flight; and Khalid, feeling aware of his death and destruction, had no resource but deceit and stratagem. So he cast away his spear out of his hand, and returning his sword to its scabbard, urged the speed of his horse Caasa, that had belonged to King Zoheir, till he came up to Antar, exclaiming, Hold, in the name of God! O Arab, I see my mistake, truly rapacity has excited our men, and the horrors of war have visited them; they attacked your property in the dark, but vengeance has overtaken them—they arose to engage you before they made inquiries of you, but their treachery has swiftly laid them low, and the great and mean have been slain: but, O Arab, I am their Chief, and on me ought to fall the blame and the reproach; but, O hero, I demand of you in the name of Him who raised the heavens, that you tell me to what Arabs you belong, and that you order your companions to withhold the sword-blow till the morning brightens, when perhaps our dissension may terminate in peace. Know too, that the daylight will demonstrate this fact, and the Cahtanian will be distinguished from the Adnanian.

Antar, on hearing this, acquiesced, and seeing that he had thrown away his spear, instantly despatched Shiboob, ordering him to withdraw the

Absians from the tribe of Aamir, and to tell the tribe what Khalid, the chief of the fugitives, had said, and to prohibit them from thrusting and striking. O Arab, exclaimed Antar to Khalid, as to your demand about our parentage, we are of the noble tribe of Abs, and I am Antar, son of Shedad; our leader is the Chief Asyed, son of Jazeemah, and wherefore have you exposed us to this disgraceful transaction? I have been absent in the land of Yemen on an affair that interested our chiefs. I went and I slew their foes, and with my sword I have overturned their power. I exerted myself, that my promise might be fulfilled. Having finished all my business, I am now on my way to my family and tribe. But what is it you mean by your questions? Woe! woe, O Aboolfawaris, said Khalid, how is it you have concealed all this from us, so that evil at your hands is come upon us? How has misfortune fallen on us from a tribe most dear to us! Truly my love for you would have increased, and in my heart would have been your glory and honour, had not this cruel affair cut asunder the connexion between us. What relationship is there between us and you? said Antar in the greatest astonishment, and what parentage? Hear, O champion of the tribe of Abs, said Khalid, for I will relate to you what has occurred during your absence, when you were in the lands of Yemen: but be not too much distressed at what you have done to my people, and that you have brought destruction

upon them, for we commenced the insult, and we were the origin of the violence, and truly I will forgive you the blood of those who have been slain out of regard to your Chief Zoheir, whom may Lat and Uzza keep in holy remembrance! for his liberality was universally acknowledged by us all, and in him we have found a strong tower and a defender. The reason of this is, that I met him at Mecca at the holy shrine, and between him and me was formed mutual faith and engagement, and when we returned from the pilgrimage, I bound myself to him, and took him with me to the tribe of Aamir (for I am their Chief Khalid, son of Giafer); I made him and his sons alight with me in the middle of the tents, and I offered them all that was in my power, in the way of hospitality, for the space of ten days, and they did not quit me till between them and us relationship was confirmed: for Zoheir, whom may Lat and Uzza ever guard in holy remembrance! demanded my daughter Bederool-Hoolel for his son Shas, and gave us things incalculable, such as no human being possesses: he also did not depart till he had given me his charger Caasa, and it is this I have under me; and he girt me on this his sword, which is now slung over my shoulders, and its name is Zeenoor: he left us praising him and full of obligations, and when he departed, I took with me a thousand horsemen of my tribe, and I am now on my way to the land of Yemen, that I may procure jewels, and robes, and

articles no King of Yemen possesses. We halted in this spot but yesterday evening, and in the morning we resolved on marching, when you arrived with your baggage-camels, and your slaves were driving them. As soon as my party saw them, they considered them as some plunder of the inhabitants of Yemen. Their avidity excited them to seize on them, and thus it all happened.

When Antar heard Khalid's narrative, and saw King Zoheir's charger under him, and his sword over his shoulder, he was confounded for a reply, and hung his head to the ground in excess of shame, and he knew not what to do.

Khalid, on seeing this, felt certain that by his artifice and deceit, the stratagem and manœuvre had had its effect, so he did not cease his villany till he dismounted and did homage to Antar, saying, May God be ever with thee; grieve not, O champion of Abs; repent not, for unwittingly you have acted thus; the fault was ours, and on us has fallen the loss. And Khalid wished to kiss his feet; but Antar dismounted: My lord, said he, death would be more tolerable to me than this act; but a liberal man pardons a slave when he perceives the apology is sincere.

The Absians came up and heard all Khalid said, and they did as Antar had done; and Antar cried out to the slaves to release the prisoners they had in charge, amongst whom were Jandah, son of Beca, and Rebia, son of Ocail, and others of the

Aamir horsemen. The whole came up to Antar and made their excuses. Peace was concluded, and Khalid rescued his friends by this deceit and stratagem, and as they took leave of each other, said Khalid, Make my compliments to my brother, King Zoheir; and he went off with the Aamirites, hardly crediting their escape. As to the Absians, they continued traversing the desert on their way home. Antar went ahead, and when his love and pensiveness overcame him, he began thus:

“ O tamarisk of the mountains, is there one to
“ report of me—to tell the state of a lover—one
“ distracted and melancholy? Mention then, in the
“ name of God, ye northern breezes, the honours
“ and glories I have attained; tell Ibla that, for
“ her sake, I have encountered horrors of the most
“ eminent hazard; that I have endured dreadful
“ scenes, and have returned triumphant, and the
“ foe, in terror of me, dared not to appear before
“ me. O Ibla, by thy life, couldst thou but see
“ Antar amongst the armies and contending mul-
“ titudes, and the horse tearing down towards me
“ at the head of the defile, like the tempestuous
“ rain, in the battle, destroyer of joys. They come
“ on the backs of swift high-mettled steeds, some
“ black, like the winds when they rush forth, some
“ red, some white, and some piebald. I shout at
“ them with an Absian shout, like thunder, that
“ thrills through the whole army. I charge towards
“ them, and I gallop at them, and I storm them with

“ the chest of Abjer. I make them taste of sword-
“ blows, and terrible spear-thrusts, with my cutlass
“ and the barb of my lance. I make them like the
“ harvest, as if they were the roots of date trees,
“ deeply interwoven in the rocks. I have dyed the
“ face of the land with their blood, and it has be-
“ come like the crimson cornelian. The gore, like
“ a rolling sea of Judas flowers, resembles a bursting
“ river. O Ibla, couldst thou but behold my
“ achievements against the foe on the day of battle,
“ in my force and my impetuosity, and my arms,
“ like the Judas tree, and my Abjer dyed with the
“ blood of every lion-hero. It is then I cry out from
“ beneath the forest of spears, whilst the dust and
“ black volumes of sand encompass me. O, by Abs,
“ I am the stubborn one among men, I will annihilate
“ horsemen with my cleaving scimitar. It is then
“ I dart from beneath the dust, and my coat of mail
“ is like the piony, and as if painted with saffron.
“ I have slain Jabir, and Hosein, and also the
“ voracious lion Ebeleshbal. I have left Masood
“ and Amroo in the desert, on the ground, and
“ Nabih, son of Ashter ; also Kelboon and his father,
“ called Nacmah the tyrant, the oppressor ; and
“ Soheib, him have I made to drink of the cup of
“ death on the lofty towering mountains. Them
“ all I have destroyed with the hewing blows of my
“ polished, my irresistible Dhami. Their property
“ I have seized, their plunder I have taken, and the
“ deserts are filled with the incalculable booty. As
“ to the troops of horsemen in the valley, there does

“ not survive of them one to tell the tale. The
“ heroes can witness for me in the contest, that I
“ am the lion—the devouring warrior: not a knight
“ like me has arrived at the highest glory, durable
“ for ages. My mother is Zebeeba, I disavow not
“ her name, and I am Antar; but I am not vain-
“ glorious: her dark complexion sparkles like a
“ sabre in the shades of night, and her shape is
“ like the well-formed spear. I am the son of Shedad,
“ and my lineage is Absian, known above the bril-
“ liant canopy of heaven. I have attained honour,
“ glory, and fame, by my resolution, so that I am in
“ the vicinity of Jupiter. Were death to see me,
“ ay to see me, he would turn aside from me, in
“ fear of my tempestuous might and power. I am
“ sublime above all knights in the field of fight, by
“ my intrepidity, by my modesty and forbearance.”

When Antar had finished his verses, they all cried, May God never abandon thy mouth, may there never be one to harm thee, O hero of the age, thou champion of the tribe of Abs and Adnan! They continued their march till they came near to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, and when they turned their eyes toward their homes, and saw the desert in tumult with the glitter of armour, and the concourse of people, and wailing lamentations, Antar was startled, and so were his companions. Doubtless some evil has befallen our families in our absence, he cried, for the whole tribe is in the utmost affliction. Now when Cais had returned home, after the death of his father, the whole land was convulsed

with weeping and clamorous sorrow. Their grief for Zoheir continued long. The tents and the dwellings of the tribe of Abs were thrown down, and re-echoed to the groans and sobs of the mourners. The people met them, and seated themselves, with Cais, on the carpet of affliction. The tribes of Fazarah, and Ghiftan, and Marah, and Dibyan, all attended, with their friends and allies; they let their turbans hang loose over their necks, and rent all the garments they had on. But when they had condoled with Cais for his father, they congratulated him on the kingdom that had fallen to him. Congratulate me not on my kingdom, said he; there is no joy till you see that I have had my revenge. Comfort your heart, and brighten your eye, said the warriors, for we will not separate from you till we have avenged you. And they despatched their slaves to bring them their horses and their arms, and they remained preparing for the contest, whilst Cais every day rode out, gaining the hearts of the people, and showing every kindness to the warriors, giving them arms, and weapons, and corslets. His father, in his lifetime, had banished many of the Absians. Cais recalled them; he conciliated them, and made them return to their native land. But as to Rebia, son of Zeead, he had great influence with King Cais, for Cais had married his daughter, and he placed great confidence in him, in all his plans, and when Cais was making his preparations for his expedition to attack the tribe of Aamir, and had assembled his forces, said Hadifah, son of Beder, to him, Wait for

me ten days, till I write to my allies, the tribe of Marah; for their knight Harith, son of Zalim, is my relation by birth, and he is now the knight of the Arabs. My cousin, said King Cais, I have indeed heard marvels of this knight, and they raise him above Antar, son of Shedad. Who is Antar, said Rebia, O Cais, when Harith is present? Now then will he exhibit in his actions things that shall be recorded of him to eternity. So Hadifah wrote to Harith, requesting his assistance against the tribe of Aamir, having first stated all about King Zoheir, and the disgrace and infamy they had brought down upon him, and he despatched the letter by a horseman of Fazarah. This Harith was a confirmed impostor; he regarded no hospitality, neither did he respect any engagement. He never kept his word; he was a great depredator, and iniquitous in all his actions. If he associated with a friend, he would betray him; and if he could overreach an ally, he would put him to death. All the Arabs were on their guard against him, and his villany had been felt by every man alive, and moreover he could not be quiet with Antar; he stationed spies and scouts over him, and his very favours were malice and perfidy.

Khalid had also written to Harith to require his aid in his hostile preparations against the tribe of Abs, saying, O Harith, I have slain King Zoheir and his son Shas, and I am resolved not to leave them a tent standing. You know what their slave Antar did to your father Zalim, and how he cut his

hair off. If you are really what I have heard you to be, that you are active and zealous, haste then, that I may accomplish your every wish, and marry you to my daughter Sitularab. Harith acquiesced in the requisitions of Khalid's letter, and having assembled five hundred of the tribe of Marah, he resolved on the expedition. About that time also arrived Hadifah's messenger, and gave him the letter; to whom he said in his malignity and deceit, There was no occasion for your chief to write me a letter; I am now marching to his assistance, and shall probably have slain Khalid ere he arrives. He sent the messenger back that very day, and he himself set out for the tribe of Aamir. When they had proceeded some distance, O Harith, said his people, we wish you would tell us what is your real intention, and whom you will assist? My cousins, said he, march with me, and be sure of wealth, for these tribes are populous, and they must engage each other; and whichever we see will conquer, to that we will turn. But we wish, said they, you would inform us which you will join first? The tribe of Khalid, said he. And thus he continued his march with his comrades, and such was his resolution.

In the meantime Hadifah's messenger returned, and informed him that Harith had preceded him against the tribe of Aamir with five hundred horsemen. Away went Hadifah to King Cais: O King, said he, know that the man is wise and faithful; he is now gone to execute what we requested of him,

and he is already on his march to fight the Aamirites before us: it is my opinion we should join him, or he will sustain their attack alone. Do, my uncle, what you please, said Cais, and tell the Arabs to make ready their warlike weapons for the expedition on this very day. The Absians accordingly came forth with their arms; they slung on their spears, and were preparing to march, and at that very moment arrived Antar and Asyed with the horsemen; they stopped near the tents. The Absian warriors mounted to go and meet them; and amongst them were Malik, King Zoheir's son, Antar's friend, and his brother Harith by his side; and as soon as they saw their uncle Asyed and Antar they scattered dust over their heads, and let down the turbans over their necks.

But Antar, marking the conduct of King Zoheir's sons, shuddered, and was stupefied, for he thought they were occupied on Shas' happiness, as Khalid had informed him. He dismounted, and in great dismay, My lord, he said to Malik, what is the matter? O Aboolfawaris, said he, a calamity never to be forgotten, a misfortune that overwhelms both men and women. And he announced the death of his father King Zoheir, and his brother Shas. The colour of the swarthy Antar became wan and livid; he was nearly fainting. My lord, said he, dead? or killed? Killed, my cousin, said Prince Malik, and their enemies have triumphed over them; and then he told Antar how his father and brother were

slain, and what Khalid had done. Upon this, Antar also related his victory over the tribe of Aamir in the defile, and that he had taken more than two hundred prisoners, among whom were Rebia, son of Ocail, and Jandah, son of Beka, and that all were set free; and how Khalid had duped him by his stratagem and deceit. On hearing this, all King Zoheir's sons set up an universal shout of grief. O Aboolfawaris, said Prince Malik, it was that Jandah who slew my father. At this Antar's agony and transports were most intense. Woe, woe unto thee, O Khalid! he cried; by the faith of an Arab I will not leave thee but as a proverb for every one that stands and sits. His tears flowed in streams; his sobs and lamentations augmented; and thus he gave vent to his sorrows:

“ O my eyes, shed showers of tears for the anguish and calamities that have befallen me. Dry not on my cheeks, but flow in gushing torrents like the rain-charged clouds. O my woes, quit not my frame. O my agonies, leave not my body. O mourners of the tribe, weep and lament; multiply your afflictions with sobs of sorrow and distress, for he is lost on whom I most relied for aid. Fear not the rebukes of the railers: he was my stay in every evil, and my sword when calamities flowed upon me. He was the refuge for the weak, and the asylum of the poor, who mourned in emaciating penury. He was a king to whom princes bowed down, and to whose

“ power the Arab chiefs submitted. O Zoheir,
“ verily my spirit is broken. It was thou that didst
“ repulse the foe, and every enemy from me. Alas!
“ O race of Abs, thou hast lost thy glory; thy
“ noble, thy merciful, and bountiful prince! Past
“ away is thy benefactor! Thy days are darkened;
“ now their light is gone, thy flame is extinguished
“ in the obscurity of death. He was a full moon
“ shining in its sublimity, and he was to me the
“ most eminent of virtues. How indeed has the
“ tribe of Aamir triumphed! Khalid exults and is
“ proud of his conquest. Verily they have slain
“ Shas, and he was a knight who was my succour
“ in every adversity. Oh! I will weep for them as
“ long as the birds shall sing, or the drops of the
“ pouring clouds shall fall. I will take vengeance
“ on the tribe of Aamir, who have revolted, and
“ have vanquished these warriors. Khalid! Oh!
“ I will make him drink with my sword the draught
“ of the black gore in the midst of the heroes. I
“ will exterminate the tribes with penetrating spear-
“ thrusts, and tear out their hearts with sharp-
“ edged scimitars. If I do not keep my word, may
“ I never succeed in my wishes for a friend! Soon
“ will I realize my project against them with my
“ sabre; soon will I pull down their glories and
“ their honours. I will leave among their dwell-
“ ings nought but lamentations and shrieks of woe
“ for the loss of friends! I am Antar, well known
“ in war and battle, when I make the heroes fly

“terrified at death. But, alas! fortune has cast
“me into affliction, and for the loss of Zoheir my
“heart is melted!”

When the horsemen heard these verses they burst out into a loud expression of grief and affliction, and the creeping thrill of sorrow crawled over their bodies. They entered the tents, their heads exposed, and their clothes all torn. Rebia, old in villany, met them, saying, Cousins, men should assuage their grief, and soon resign their sorrows. Let not one of ye prolong his discourse, for this day is fixed for departure. It was Rebia's intention thus to add new anguish to the heart of Antar. He made him no reply, but he swelled with fury; his eyeballs glared red, till they became like two liquid globes of crimson blood; he roared and bellowed; his patience was spent; he struck Rebia on the chest, and hurled him on his back, and his helmet flew off from his head, and he was unable to utter a word. Antar repaired unto King Cais. At the entrance of the tent Antar stopped and wept; he sobbed and shrieked in excess of grief, as also Asyed; but Antar thus exclaimed:

“Set is the full moon, though once it was in its
“zenith; hidden is its light, and all is dark.
“Eclipsed is the sun, and the morn no more re-
“turns in smiles. Fallen are the constellations;
“they have disappeared; the atmosphere is ob-
“scured; the dust of darkness is over it; all the
“seas are hollow, and are sunk deep; we have lost

“ its dew and its clouds. At the moment that Zo-
“ heir fell dead infamy shrouded us, and sat upon
“ us. Fortune has made him drink of the cup of
“ death, but likewise fortune will be quick in its
“ vengeance. He was my stay, my armour in ad-
“ versity; he was my breastplate, my spear, my
“ scimitar. O my eyes, when ye shed not tears,
“ may sleep be denied ye! I swear by Him who
“ slays and brings to life, by Him who rules the
“ light and the darkness, never will I raise my
“ sword in battle till I behold all my enemies in
“ dismay and in shame. O tribe of Aamir, O clan
“ of Kelab, dread the light and shade of my sword;
“ soon shall thy wives scream in terrors of captivity;
“ soon shall they weep for their orphaned little ones.
“ I am Antar, son of Shedad, and my star is high
“ raised above the sublimity of the seven heavens!”

When Antar had finished his verses, his tears gushed out in incessant streams, and he wept bitterly, till he could no more, and he fainted; but when he recovered from his swoon, he cast his eyes towards King Zoheir's seat, and thus expressed himself:

“ Weep abundantly, my eyes, in torrents of tears;
“ aid me, relieve my woes with weeping! For oh!
“ I have lost a prince that was my support—that
“ was my full moon; but it is now set below the
“ earth! I have lost the sea and the rain by my
“ enemies, and him whose benevolence resembled
“ the deluging clouds. I have lost a lion, but in no

“ lion was there his power. I have lost the knight
“ of war, the invincible hero: my heart is on fire.
“ I have lost all resignation for a prince who taught
“ the Arabs on the day of combat with his spear.
“ O Cais, depend on me; for in my heart is a flame
“ of fire that consumes it, and my forbearance I can
“ no longer persist in. Rise with me; let us seek
“ vengeance speedily, for death is sweeter to my
“ heart than honey. Reproach me not for my wars
“ —I love them: I will hear neither word nor re-
“ buke. Night is my complexion, and the lions of
“ war know me. The coat of mail is my strong
“ tower, and my heart is hewn out of a rock. War-
“ riors are reduced to contempt by me in the day of
“ combat, as the Arabs can witness for me. Woe,
“ woe to my heart, for what it has lost. Death,
“ now Zoheir is no more, is my noblest aim. O
“ race of Abs, haste ye to vengeance against the
“ tribe of Aamir, and fear not death. Exert your-
“ selves with me, for you have a slave that has felled
“ into disgrace every knight of the plains and the
“ mountains. How many tribes are there in whose
“ blood I have dyed my sword in the day of battle!
“ How many the heroes I have laid low! How
“ many valleys has it tinged! How many lions have
“ bowed to me! How many multitudes have I ex-
“ tirpated! death can bear me witness. Khalid!
“ soon will I leave him stretched on the face of the
“ earth, and his women as childless mothers shall
“ mourn him. To-morrow will I annihilate ye, tribe

“ of Aamir, quick with the point of the spear, and
“ the edge of my polished sabre. I will capture
“ your women ; I will leave no vestige of them ; I
“ will plunder your cattle, your property, and your
“ camels. I am Antar, whose qualities are well
“ known ; the destruction of warriors, undaunted at
“ death.”

When Antar had finished his verses, he went to his own dwelling, where all his regrets were renewed. But Cais was resolved on immediate departure ; and he set out with the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, and the Arabs of that land and country. Antar also wished to go and aid him ; but Malik, the brother of Cais, came to him : O Aboolfawaris, said he, stay at home, and do not follow my brother this time, for he would ill-use you, and perhaps even reject you, and make you ashamed on account of that miserable Amarah, and his despicable brother. How so ? said Antar. Malik upon this related to him about Harith, and told him all the news ; how Hadifah had written to him requesting his assistance, and last night Rebia hinted that the expedition would not be offered to you, and it is he who has concerted this plan. Then he described to him Harith's intrepidity and prowess, and how the Arabs boasted of him, even above you, said Malik.

Antar was exceedingly annoyed at hearing this : Go you, however, and join your brother, and tell him that Antar thanks him, and begs his pardon for all he has done. May the praise of God be on the

man who assists him, and can serve him instead of me in this expedition ; and if he can take his revenge on Khalid, son of Giafer, praise be to the only and Omnipotent God ! but, if he does not subdue his foe, then will I go against him alone, and will do unto him and his, what shall be for ages recorded. Thus Malik taking leave of him, astonished at his magnanimity, said, O Aboolfawaris, were I not afraid of being a scandal among the Arabs, and of their reproaches, for refusing to seek vengeance for my father, I would not follow him on this occasion. At last he departed, and his tears streamed copiously.

The camps, and horsemen, and troops, all followed Cais : his army amounted in all to twenty-five thousand men, all bold horsemen. Every one of them thought that Antar only staid at home to have his fill of Ibla, whilst Amarah headed all the warriors, brandishing his spear in his left hand, quite delighted at the absence of Antar on this expedition. But Antar, as soon as Prince Malik quitted him, returned home ; he took off his warlike weapons, and entering the tents, his tears burst from his eyes, and he was absorbed in an ocean of reflection ; when lo ! the wives of his uncles came to him, and congratulated him on his safety. He paid them great respect, and received them with honour and attention ; and they thus addressed him :

“ Had we known of your arrival in the night,
“ we would have hasted to you on the crowns of
“ our heads. We would have given you the most

“honourable reception. O you illustrious one! the
“life of our existence!”

Ibla and her mother were among the women; so Antar was much pleased, and his heart was filled with joy at seeing his beloved. He inquired about her health, &c.—to which she replied, Nothing has happened but what you have heard respecting King Zoheir and his son Shas—every one is acquainted with that. But we have been expecting your arrival, and that you would take vengeance on them; but we see all the men are gone, and you remain at home. Daughter of my uncle, said Antar, the party have obtained one who will seek their retaliation without me: they rejected me; I wished to accompany them, but they refused me. He told her what Prince Malik had imparted to him, at which the women were greatly surprised, saying Ay! that is the foul plan of the rogue Amarah and his iniquitous brother, for King Cais never did any thing but by the advice of Rebia. Well, cousin, said Ibla to Antar, pray where is my share of all this spoil? or am I no longer an object of value or consideration with you? By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, my share has been five hundred he and she camels, of the camels of Sewda, and the mountain of Volcano, and they are all blue-eyed, with black hair and bodies. So tell your black slaves to drive them out to-morrow morning, and mix them with the Asafeer camels, and excuse the trifle, for I was on Asyed's business. Then he told her all that had occurred

on the excursion, and the horrors he had endured, thus expressing himself:

“ O Ibla, I have a heart steady in its love for
“ thee; and ever anxious in its passion. O Ibla,
“ pity me for my love. I am thy captive-victim,
“ and my tears are like the stormy ocean. O Ibla,
“ thou hast vanquished my heart with a form, whose
“ beauties even flash before the brilliant sun. O
“ Ibla, thy face resembles in its lustre the dawn,
“ and thy tresses the darkness of night, the com-
“ plexion of thy adorer. O Ibla, not in all the
“ songstresses together are thy charms: no, by
“ God, thy beauty is far superior. O Ibla, I am
“ indeed overwhelmed with love; all the world must
“ pity—compassionate me. O Ibla, thy cheek re-
“ sembles the crimson rose, and the pionies of the
“ gardens are like it. O Ibla, in thy bosom are the
“ pomegranates I desire, were even the swords armed
“ with lightning to flash from it. O Ibla, among
“ the Houris there is not a face like thine; and
“ amongst mankind there is no lover like me. O
“ Ibla, grant but a meeting to me, whose whole
“ soul pants for thee. O Ibla, were even death to
“ visit me, nought shall daunt me, for I am true
“ and firm; for all I demand of God is a sight of
“ thee at the dawn and mid-day, and whenever
“ shines the sun !”

